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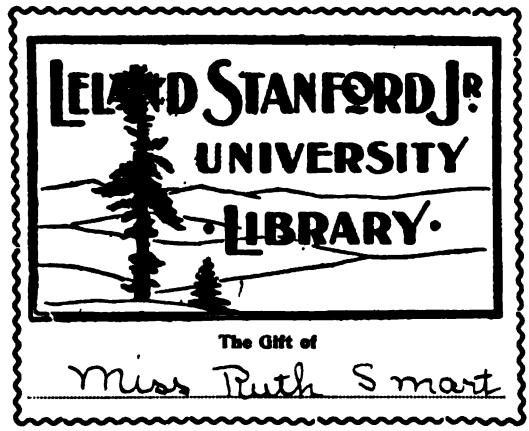
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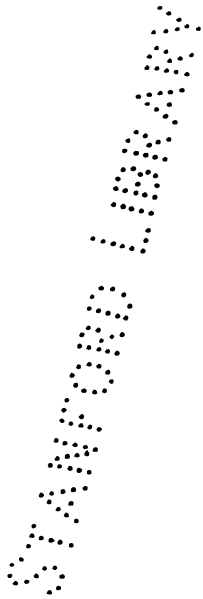

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Courtiers and Favourites
of Royalty

Memoirs of the Court of France
With Contemporary and Modern Illustrations
Collected from the
French National Archives

BY

LEON VALLÉE

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Memoirs of Talleyrand

IN TWO VOLUMES

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MEMOIRS

OF

C. M. TALLEYRAND

DE PERIGORD

VOL. I

Dedication

TO

CHARLES MAURICE TALLEYRAND

DE PERIGORD

Sir,—I am convinced that your vanity will be more flattered by the publication of your successful intrigues in boudoirs, than your honour hurt by the exposure of your dangerous plots in Cabinets. I dedicate, therefore, to yourself the private and public Memoirs of your own life. I have long and well known you!

The Compiler.

M. DE TALLEYRAND

In the first rank of French statesmen and diplomats of the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century stands Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, who for more than half a century, under the most opposite political régimes, was involved in all the important affairs of his country, and played a great part in all the contemporaneous history of Europe.

From birth M. de Talleyrand is in nature's black books. An accident having lamed him, he is neglected by his parents and lives amidst the domestics of the household. This desertion causes him later to say that he "has never slept under the same roof with his father and mother." The infirmity has yet another disastrous consequence for M. de Talleyrand: it interdicts him from the military career to which, following the custom of the age, his rank as eldest son of a noble family destined him.

As with the Cardinal de Retz, M. de Talleyrand has the least clerical spirit possible. Like the Cardinal, he too has to take religious orders because such is the will of his superiors. When he leaves the great seminary of St. Sulpice at Paris, it is to end his theological studies with his uncle the Cardinal de Reims; then he returns to Paris with the title of abbé. His existence there is that of all sons of good family, wealthy and worldly. "M. l'abbé de

Périgord," as he is called at this period, enfranchises himself and leads the most licentious of lives; and if the public voice is not raised against his scandalous debaucheries, it is because in the eighteenth century the morals of Society, in respect to the higher clergy, have treasuries of indulgence which we no longer know.

Although sprung from one of the most ancient and noble of French families, the young abbé already shows himself imbued with liberal ideas. He writes to his friend M. de Calonne: "There is nothing which cannot be accomplished by the provincial administrations, and there is no prosperous change that can be made without them. *The people will at last be counted for something.*" The abbé's words are not slow to take shape in action.

Despite his dissolute existence, and thanks to his father's pressing solicitations to King Louis XVI., he obtains in October 1788 a nomination to the bishopric of Autun, an office to which is attached a revenue of 80,000 livres. Yet this royal favour does not hinder the young prelate in the least from taking boldly the side of the new ideas when the Revolution of 1789 breaks out, and it finds in him one of its most ardent promoters.

From this moment the practical, calculating mind of M. de Talleyrand stands out sharply. M. de Talleyrand ranges himself on the side of the power of the day, and watches the changes of the political kaleidoscope. Not one of them will surprise him unaware, for he will always have divined it, and arranged to draw personal profit from it. Judge of this by one detail. The court knows him to be very

influential, desires to attach him to its interests, and offers him money to consent to defend the royal cause before the States-General, to which he is deputy. M. de Talleyrand reckons up the sum offered him, then returns it, saying coldly to Louis XVI.'s messengers, "I shall gain more on the other side, and I shall be safer there, for the Revolution will be stronger than you!" The whole man is in that answer.

At this moment the Revolution reigns absolute mistress. What does M. de Talleyrand? He upholds the people's cause, although he belongs to the nobility; and he, Bishop of Autun, mounts the tribune of the Constituent Assembly to advocate the abolition of the privileges of the Church and the sale of the Church properties to the behoof of the State. He does not stop there. He is among the number who vote for the creation of a constitutional clergy; and despite the prohibition of the Roman court, he consecrates the new bishops, and celebrates at Paris, in the Champ de Mars, the famous mass called that of the Federation. The Pope excommunicates the Bishop of Autun. The latter, on the receipt of the pontifical letter, is not disturbed. He writes jocularly to his friend, the Duke of Lauzun: "You know the news—come and console me and take supper with me. Everybody is going to refuse me fire and water, so this evening we shall have only iced meats and drink only wine."

A little later, M. de Talleyrand is sent to London by the Legislative Assembly, with the mission of inducing England to ally itself with France. When he returns to Paris his name is on the list of *émigrés*,

because a letter has been discovered in which he expresses sentiments favourable to royalty. Compelled to leave France, he takes refuge first in the United States; then, coming nearer Paris, he settles at Amsterdam, where he awaits, after the 9th Thermidor, the result of the steps taken by Chénier, who asks of the convention the recall of M. de Talleyrand, *the benefactor of the Republic.* The Assembly votes the recall, and M. de Talleyrand reappears in Paris, where he intrigues more than ever, for he is homesick for power. Thanks to his restless genius, his knowledge of affairs, and the support which Mme. de Staël and Barras lend him, he succeeds in having himself named Minister of Foreign Affairs despite the resistance of Carnot, who said of him: "He is a wretch who has all the vices of the old régime and none of the virtues of the Republic. As long as I am director, he shall not be minister."

At this period M. de Talleyrand is courting Bonaparte, who seems to him marked out for the highest destinies. The *coup d'état* of the 18th Brumaire is to come, and the ex-prelate will contribute a large share to the general success! The powerful aid brought to the establishment of the Empire merits a reward. M. de Talleyrand obtains it: he is named Minister of Foreign Affairs, a post which he had been obliged to resign in 1799, after the scandal caused by the discovery of his financial and other jobberies. Thenceforward for many years he presides over the diplomatic relations of France with foreign powers. He lends to Napoleon, with the suppleness and penetration of his mind, his marvellous talent for negotiations. He is so skilful, he

renders such services, that the Emperor, after he has dictated and signed the treaty of Presburg, confers on him, with the revenues of the principality, the title of Prince of Benevento.

After the signature of the peace of Tilsit, M. de Talleyrand shares the common lot of most of Napoleon's collaborators. Constrained to surrender his portfolio as Minister of Foreign Affairs, he is no longer employed save in scattered negotiations. Not long after, on the occasion of the Spanish war, he falls altogether into disgrace. As Fouché also has just been dismissed by the Emperor, M. de Talleyrand and the Duke of Otranto make up with each other, and unite in zealously preparing the fall of that Empire which both had so largely contributed to found.

On the events of January 1814, if M. de Talleyrand consents to accept a place in the council of regency, that does not hinder him from preparing, underhand, means for the restoration of the Bourbons. Then, when the French government is reduced to impotence, when the allies are masters of Paris, M. de Talleyrand is the one man still possessing a moral authority sufficient to obtain from them, in favour of his fatherland, conditions of peace relatively very mild. Look at the diplomat once more
1 8 when Louis XIV. charges him with representing conquered France at the Congress of Vienna. He, whose country has no longer an army and no further resources, succeeds in forcing the door of the secret committee of the allies; and when he is seated in the congress he dares to say to the ministers of victorious Europe, "Gentlemen, I bring you what

you have not—I bring you the conception of right!" Still more, he becomes the arbiter of the allies in their differences.

During the Hundred Days, M. de Talleyrand holds himself aloof, without lending ear to Napoleon's solicitations. Why should he yield to his advances? He knows that the restoration of the Empire is ephemeral. He means to reserve himself for to-morrow's future. Hardly has Louis XVIII. returned from Ghent, when M. de Talleyrand appears again in power in the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs; then he is appointed chamberlain, with 100,000 francs salary. When the Revolution of 1830 takes place he contributes to the accession of Louis Philippe to the throne of France. Finally, he returns to London as ambassador, and lays the foundation of the Franco-English alliance, which is designated under the name of the *entente cordiale*, and which is his last diplomatic act.

From this time on, although he preserves in all their integrity his intellectual faculties, M. de Talleyrand lives retired from public business. And when he dies, May 17, 1838, at the age of eighty-five, you will find him, on the day of his decease, diplomat and courtier still, just as he has been during his whole existence. For months he has determined to reconcile himself officially to the Catholic Church, and has drawn up a written retraction which he has addressed to the Roman pontiff; but he waits till the morning of the day of his death to sign this important document. And if you were in the chamber a few hours later, when King Louis Philippe makes a last visit to the dying diplomat,

you would see the latter raise himself with difficulty on his bed of pain, and hear him say to his sovereign, smiling, "Sire, thank you: it is the greatest honour my house has received!"

Such in brief is the curious life of that philosophic abbé, whose line of conduct remained inimitable. A prelate who deserts the sanctuary, M. de Talleyrand is successively for the Revolution with the Constituent, for the Directory at the 18th Fructidor, for the Consulate at the 18th Brumaire, for the Empire in 1804, for the Restoration in 1814, for the barricades and the Revolution in 1830. If he has served no other political régime, it is because France has known no other; the occasion alone was wanting.

"This man," said Pozzo di Borgo, "has grown great by ranging himself always beside the small, and helping those who needed him most." This judgment of a rival in influence seems to us extreme, and we are rather disposed to accept that which M. de Talleyrand gives of himself when he writes: "It is not agreeable to everybody to get himself crushed under the ruins of a building which threatens to fall!" Now, M. de Talleyrand was too prudent to run such a risk, and his whole life is a proof that he always knew how to assure his safety at the moment as well as that of the morrow.

Physically, M. de Talleyrand exhibits a bad complexion, and an impassive face on which no impression reflects itself. The head is small; the chin is partly hidden in a large ascending cravat; above a sharp *retroussé* nose gray eyes couch under thick eyebrows; the mouth, whose lower lip overflows and advances above the upper, has a haughty and myste-

rious expression; the voice is strong and deep; the gait slow and dignified; and the cold demeanour is corrected by the geniality of the smile. As to the man's courtesy, it is proverbial; it has certainly been as useful to him in his negotiations as the subtlety of his mind, his suppleness of character, his remarkable aptitude for treating the most difficult affairs, and his nose for events.

This great nobleman, who has so much ease in his movements, who feels himself so much at home in the most varied surroundings, has one indelible stain —he is greedy of money: he sits at gaming tables; he dabbles in stocks; he has an ear open to pecuniary propositions which all the courts of Europe make to him. He loves little presents,—*douceurs*, as he terms them,—and he himself admits to us that in the course of his diplomatic career he has received sixty millions from foreign powers. But sharp as he is after gain, M. de Talleyrand can repulse the most tempting offers if he judges that the interest of France is in contradiction with these interested solicitations; so he has not hesitated a moment to refuse the four millions of florins which the magnates of Warsaw offer him to buy his voice in favour of reëstablishing their country. This scruple, which honours the statesman, enough of a patriot to impose silence on his personal selfishness, will earn him the indulgence of posterity, which, forgetting the weaknesses of the individual, will only remember the great services rendered by him to his country under the most critical circumstances.

LÉON VALLÉE.

PREFACE

In the compilation of these Memoirs it has required more assiduity, labour and industry to collect material, to assert facts and verify authorities, than to arrange the whole in a biographical, or, rather, in an historical, order. But, notwithstanding these long, troublesome and diligent (often tiresome and always disgusting) researches, some errors may have crept in and some omissions have occurred. The eagerness, however, with which they shall be corrected in another edition will, it is hoped, convince the reader that they have been unintentional, and that we would gladly have avoided them.

It is hardly possible to write the life of any great criminal who has figured in the annals of the French Rebellion, without connecting with it some shocking periods not immediately connected with his own plots and crimes. In delineating, therefore, the portrait, and relating the particulars of a traitor who, in the name of Liberty, revolted, in 1789, against his lawful Sovereign, and who, in 1805, is an *organised slave* under the title of one of the principal dignitaries of Bonaparte's military republic, it has been unavoidable not to give, at the same time, a short sketch of the revolutionary history itself. Attention has, however, always been paid not to lose sight of the hero and his achievements.

In these volumes Talleyrand has been exposed in his true colours: as a subject, as a Christian, as an intriguer, as a politician, and as a lover. Since they were sent to the Press, we have been favoured by a gentleman of rank—a British subject, now in England—with some traits illustrating Talleyrand's character as a friend. They are inserted in the gentleman's own words:

"A Roman Catholic by birth, and a descendant of a Jacobite family of no little notoriety in 1688, I was sent by my parents at an early age from England to France for education. Their reason for doing so was a prospect I had of inheriting, at the probably not distant death of a grand-uncle, besides a large fortune, one of the foreign regiments in the French service, which had, with little interruption, been hereditary in my family ever since the reign of Louis XIV.

"In 1784 my grand-uncle died and left me, at the age of sixteen, property amounting to £4,800 a year; and the virtuous King Louis XVI. appointed me Colonel, *à la suite*, of the regiment lately commanded by my grand-uncle.

"At my entrance into the world, which, considering both my rank and fortune, was brilliant, I met Talleyrand de Perigord, then Bishop of Autun, at the hotel of the Duchess of B——, who introduced me to him. Admiring his lively genius and fashionable wit, I was not sorry to see that my company was not indifferent to him, although he was fifteen years older than myself. In his turn, he presented me to all those societies of Versailles and Paris which were most agreeable to me as a young man, and we became

inseparable. Though not of age, I was happy enough to oblige him, by my credit and name, with several considerable sums to prevent his dishonour—his affairs, from his passion for expensive pleasures, being very much deranged. Of these sums, nearly £1,000 remained due to me until 1791, *when he paid them in assignats!*

"Being too early my own master, my education had been much neglected, and I hardly knew, in 1789, the difference between a Monarchical and a Republican Government. My religious notions, and the oath that I had taken to the King at the head of my regiment, were sufficient to convince me that I could not conscientiously as a Christian, or consistently as a man of honour, take another oath to the pretended nation, annihilating my former one. I, therefore, gave in my resignation as a colonel, but continued to reside in France as a British subject, and under the protection of the then English Ambassador, the late respectable Duke of Dorset.

"After many, but vain, endeavours to convert me to his many revolutionary principles, and to approve of his revolutionary conduct, Talleyrand's visits to me became less frequent; he declared, however, that his friendship was always the same, *because political disagreements could never embroil real friends.* Being indirectly accused of being privy to the unfortunate attempt of Louis XVI., in June, 1791, to escape his assassins, Talleyrand informed me in time of my danger, and flight preserved me from imprisonment. In return, I was weak enough to be the dupe of his professions, and to assure the unfortunate Queen of France of his loyalty.

"After narrowly escaping the massacres of Sep-

tember, 1792, I found Talleyrand in England continuing the same assurances of friendship. I, therefore, on his return to France in 1796, and his appointment as a Republican Minister in 1797, applied to him to show that fidelity to his friend which he had been unable to prove to his King, in procuring me permission to return to France, and to reclaim my property there. In July, 1797, I obtained this permission, but not without previously paying one hundred guineas as a *douceur* for a pass. The Revolution of the 4th September following soon, however, destroyed all my hopes, and as sickness prevented me from obeying the decree which ordered all claimants to quit Paris in twenty-four hours, I was arrested and sent to the Temple. Talleyrand's interest procured me, in January, 1798, my release from prison; but, in going over to England, I was at Dunkirk plundered by the custom-house officers of nearly three hundred louis d'or, confided to my care by the relations of some emigrants in this country. Two months afterwards, to reclaim this money, I went back to France with a neutral vessel, but was arrested on my landing and confined, first at Ostend, and afterwards at St. Omer. I wrote to Talleyrand, who, after some delay, obtained me my liberty; but the money seized had been condemned, and was lost. He refused to interfere concerning my property, except upon one condition — that I should either with a French commission as a general officer join and instruct the Irish rebels, or as an adjutant-general sail in a neutral vessel with despatches for Bonaparte in Egypt, and there obey his commands. As both my duty as a British subject and my principles as a Royalist did not

permit my acceptance of such terms, I was again imprisoned in the Temple, from which, after a severe confinement of nine months—during which I declined several new and similar proposals to serve rebellion—I was carried under an escort of *gendarmes* to the Batavian frontier, and ordered, under pain of death, never more to enter the territory of the French Republic.

"I then went to Embden, where, in three weeks afterwards, I embarked on board a Prussian vessel for the Continent of America, having there some relatives; but our vessel was detained by a French privateer from Dunkirk. After being brought into that port, I was known again, arrested, and sent a prisoner to Paris, and once more the Temple was my cruel abode. There I was then tried five different times for life, by five different military commissions. First as a returned emigrant, and, when proving myself a British subject, as a spy—a title the revolutionary laws gave to every British subject found in France, and not an adopted citizen or a prisoner of war.[1] But though the conclusions of the public accusers were against me, the

1 The compiler of these Memoirs has also several times had the honour of confinement in the Temple, and of trials before military commissions. That the secret agents of France are found where they are little suspected the following anecdote proves: Having often amused himself with sending anonymous communications to English papers exposing the views and aims of French rebels, one of these communications, sent in 1792 to a then loyal print, was in his own handwriting presented to him in 1799 in the Temple by the public accuser, to convince the judges of his ancient enmity to the Revolution. This paper could have been got nowhere else but in the printing office, where some French spy had penetrated. It had marks of having been in the hands of compositors.

members of the military commissions acquitted me. For this, Talleyrand took upon himself the merit, though I have reason to believe that he rather desired my execution than acquittal.

"At last, in April, 1800, the doors of the Temple were opened to me. Unfortunately, a desire to see the hero of the day, Bonaparte, made me accept of a card, procured me by a friend (whom necessity had forced into the revolutionary Senate), to be present at the Consular review. I got a good place on the front benches in the great hall of the Palace of the Tuileries, by the side of a lady with four children, dressed in mourning. When Bonaparte passed us, she threw herself, with the children, at his feet, and presented a petition. I had heard, eight years before, the good Louis XVI., on the very spot, in a similar occurrence, tell petitioners to 'Kneel before their God, but never before man.' My recollection of that circumstance, and, perhaps, my indignation at what I saw, made me forget that I was in the presence of a military despot. My looks must have betrayed my feelings, because I observed that Bonaparte had his eyes stedfastly fixed on me, and rather stammered than uttered an answer to the petitioners, always kneeling. When he went on, he whispered to his aide-de-camp, Colonel Savary, who regarded me with attention, and afterwards, in going out, spoke to four grenadiers (sentries inside the door), who fixed and observed me in their turn. Although I was there without any criminal intent or reproach, I became, however, rather alarmed, particularly when my petitioning neighbour told me that the First Consul, during her conversation with him, had never ceased

to look fixedly at me, *gnashing his teeth*, and that she supposed I was a conspirator. Assuring her to the contrary, she bid me begone. At the door of the hall I was, however, stopped by the sentries, who told me that I was a prisoner (*consigner*) until the First Consul's return, and could not, without his orders, leave the room. Immediately, a rumour was circulated among the hundreds of persons present that a conspiracy had been discovered, and that I was one of the principal chiefs. Everybody, in consequence, avoided my presence with terror. At Bonaparte's return, in passing me he stared at me with a ferocious and threatening look. When the hall was cleared, Colonel Savary, accompanied by a police commissary, enquired after my pass or card of citizen, who I was, and what my business was there? Upon answering him that I was a British subject claiming property in France, but just released from the Temple, and that curiosity alone had brought me there, I was ordered to tell the names of my friends or acquaintances at Paris. Not wishing to expose either Talleyrand or other persons, I mentioned only a banker and notary who for years had transacted business for my family and myself. After being searched all over for *arms*, *papers* or *poison*, I was ordered back to the Temple, where Fouché's secretary, Desmarets, examined me secretly, and accused me of being a British agent sent to conspire against Bonaparte. I referred him to the determinations of the military commissions, to which he answered: 'The rack shall make you speak out.' I then wrote several letters to Talleyrand, telling him of my situation, and asking, as a favour, rather to be shot

than tortured; but without receiving any answer. In some weeks I was called before another military commission, which acquitted me of all capital charges, but ordered me to quit France immediately.

"During my many years' wanderings without a home, I had been taken in and defrauded to a large amount by two men who, I am certain, were revolutionary agents and missionaries. The one had been a steward to my parents and grand-uncle; the other was introduced to me, as a man in great favour with the Directory and willing to serve me, by an English gentleman who pretended the warmest friendship and greatest compassion for my misfortunes. Having several affairs to settle, and no money for a journey, I continued, contrary to the sentence of the military commission, to remain secreted at Paris, where, in 1800, I had the bad luck to meet the last-mentioned of these infamous men, who, not to denounce me or to bring forward a pretended suspicious letter said to have been addressed to me from England, wished to compel me to sign bills due to him for 12,000 livres. He had two years before, in showing me a promise of the Director Barras in my favour, got from me the secret where, in my house at Paris, my plate was concealed, which, to the value at the lowest of £2,500, he stole; and, to conceal his robbery, caused my house to be sold as national property. My presence of mind preserved me this time from his snares; but such was his inveteracy that, suspecting I was gone to Holland, a police spy arrived there with a requisition, in consequence of his denunciation, to have me delivered up as an English agent. The assistance of two English gentlemen, who lodged

by chance in the same inn with me at Rotterdam, kindly procured me means to escape this danger and to go to Germany. There a Dutchman of the name of Bruiesson joined me, and, with the positive promise of Talleyrand of having my unsold property restored, allured me back to France. I had dined at Talleyrand's table in this man's company, who bore a respectable character, perhaps because he was said to be rich. Whether he was the dupe or accomplice of Talleyrand I cannot determine; but I had not been at Paris ten days when, after a refusal of carrying, under the name and with the pass of an American traveller, despatches to General Menou in Egypt, I was again shut up in the Temple. Then, one of the above-mentioned persons visited me with a proposal from Talleyrand to exchange my pecuniary claims in France for those which a French citizen related to him had in England, where a large sum belonging to him in the Funds was under sequestration. To this I willingly assented, and, according to his desire, and not to excite any alarm, dated as from Hamburg the letters which I, on this subject, wrote from the Temple to my friends in England. To convince me of sincerity on his part, to delude me so much the more, and, perhaps, to cause my disgrace, if not ruin, letters of credit taken in my name for defraying my travelling expenses, &c., as from some capital banking-houses in London and at Frankfort, were delivered to me to the amount of 36,000 livres, for which sum I gave my bonds. To my utter astonishment these letters of credit, when presented, were proved to be forgeries, and had I not been well known to a respectable banker at Frankfort, the consequence would have become most fatal to me

and to my honour. Fortunately, such infamous frauds had before been played by Talleyrand's agents on unfortunate prisoners, whom they attempted to dishonour abroad, after being unable to pervert their loyalty or shake their principles at home: in the commercial cities on the Continent these nefarious deeds are well known. But, if I escaped the plot laid against my honour on the Continent, I suffered severely in my fortune in France. The bonds I had given for the letters of credit were, during my absence, brought before the tribunals, and my remaining property, twenty times the value of the bonds, was disposed of at an auction for merely a trifle to pay them.[1] Those occurrences happened in the spring of 1801. In the following autumn, when the Marquis of Cornwallis, to whom I had seven years before been introduced, arrived in France as an English Plenipotentiary, I presented to him a memorial concerning my demands, which he recommended to Talleyrand, who, in consequence, invited me to breakfast with him. Disowning all connection

1 In this selfish and depraved age the unfortunate are always in the wrong; though it is impossible that men who, from fidelity to their duty and principles, have preferred poverty to affluence, and obscurity to celebrity, could at once be capable of a mean action. How many have not, however, their honour stained because a revolutionary tribunal has sent them to death as forgers of passes, of assignats, of bills of exchange, of banknotes, &c., which probably they received from their very judges or their agents? How many honourable persons in France have not, as the Duke of Enghien, been condemned as English spies by the hired judges and assassins of some powerful criminal, without any evidence but what was forged? In revolutionary times men have to be cautious how to form opinions and calumniate characters. Appearances are not to be depended upon where guilt rules in palaces and innocence suffers in gaols, or perishes on the scaffold.

with, and even *knowledge of*, these infamous intriguers who had swindled me of my bonds and exposed me to the most imminent danger, he assured me of the continuance of his friendship, and, as a proof, he said that he had already mentioned to the First Consul my sufferings and my innocence. He endeavoured to convince me of the folly of continuing to suffer for a cause every day made more desperate, and to persuade me to take advantage of the prosperity which was offered in joining those whom *fortune* and *merit* favoured. He said that Bonaparte, *upon his responsibility*, had consented to appoint me a colonel of a Corps of Guides, composed entirely of young men of good military education, destined to serve, under General de Caen, in the East Indies. 'And,' added he, 'it will be your own fault if, in a few years, you have not regained in Asia double the amount of the fortune you have lost in Europe; and, if your conduct is approved of, depend upon it that your advancement shall be rapid.' Upon my positive declaration that neither rank nor riches should ever make me act contrary to my principles, and upon my observation that the recovery of my property in France was not a favour asked, but a justice demanded and due, he answered coolly: 'You will then die as you have lived, a ruined fanatic; because you cannot flatter yourself that England will go to war on account of your lost property, which will never be restored to you. I am sorry to find you an incorrigible Anglomanian and Royalist. For such a one any stay in the French Republic cannot be agreeable. My last advice to you *as a friend* is, therefore, to leave the French territory; and the sooner the better!' I knew the

meaning too well, and dreaded the consequences of this *friendly* advice too much not to take the hint and depart. Talleyrand, you are alive! I defy you to contradict the above statement! You cannot!"

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Letter of Talleyrand to Carnot Minister of War recommending appointment of Citizen Lamarine to rank of sub lieutenant in the [illegible] regiment of Hussars. Dated 10th day of Prairial, 8th year of the Republic

Relations extérieures.

Bureau

Liberté. Égalité.

Paris, le 16 Prairial an 8 an 8 de la République française, une et indivisible.

Nota. L'ordre de la correspondance exige que la réponse relate le N.° du Bureau ci-dessus indiqué.

Le Ministre des Relations extérieures,

Au Citoyen Carnot Ministre de la Guerre.

au C.en Duronel pour Rapport

J'ai l'honneur de vous adresser, mon cher Collègue, une pétition du C.en Lamorine qui sollicite le grade de Sous-lieutenant dans le 11.e Regt. de hussards. — il y est en activité de service sans interruption depuis [illegible]

5 an V a mois de germinal an deux, et présenté un certificat
honorable de la bonne conduite qu'il a toujours tenue.
je le recommande, mon cher Collègue, à votre justice
et à votre bienveillance

Salut et fraternité.

Ch. Maur. Talleyrand

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MEMOIRS

OF

C. M. TALLEYRAND

"The French Revolution has produced more Philips than Alexanders." MALLET DU PAN.

THE French people call Talleyrand Bonaparte's right arm, Berthier his military helmet, and Fouché his revolutionary armour. They ascribe to the talents of two of these ministers his achievements in the cabinet and in the field, and to the vigilance of the third the safety which the usurper enjoys in the midst of the bloody ruins of the throne, and of the reeking ashes of the statues consecrated to Liberty by Republican incendiaries. Of these three public functionaries, Talleyrand is regarded the first, and is thought the most necessary to preserve a revolutionary government in France, to maintain a revolutionary spirit in Europe, and to keep the Revolution from any retrograde tendency. To him

Bonaparte is the most obliged; and an upstart sovereign, with little more than a military education, can ill dispense with his services. Fortune and natural genius may make a warrior successful, but to form a statesman they must be assisted or improved by early and particular studies, by profound meditation, and by a long knowledge of political practice. Without Fouché, Bonaparte might have escaped the plots of the Royalists and of the Jacobins, and without Berthier he could have drawn plans of campaigns and gained battles; but without Talleyrand, the fruits of victory, those advantageous treaties which, at the expense of the liberty and independence of the Continent, have extended the boundaries and authority of France, would never have obtained ratification; he being the only counsellor whose profound cunning has hitherto often overcome the fierce obstinacy of the proud and insolent tyrant, whose military diplomacy, always confounding right with power, expects to have his dictates to foreign negotiators submitted to with the same implicit obedience as his commands to French soldiers.

Such consequence the well-founded opinions of his countrymen give to Talleyrand. To be acquainted, therefore, with the life of this minister,

to whose fatal abilities nations owe their fetters, must be nearly as interesting and useful as to know the character of that Corsican chieftain who, to gratify his lust for command, for dominion and plunder, has barbarously changed combats into butcheries and sacrilegiously torn to pieces that sacred compact called the Law of Nations, and who, by his atrocities, has become the terror and scourge of the universe.

Charles Maurice Talleyrand de Perigord was born at Paris on the 7th of March, 1754, and is descended from one of the most ancient families in France. He is the elder son of a younger branch of the Counts of Perigord, who, three centuries ago, were sovereigns of a country in the south-western part of France, yet called Perigord. Club-footed from his birth, and having no hope of any fortune from his parents, he was, from his youth, educated and destined for the Church. At the College of Louis le Grand he evinced early genius and early depravity. In 1767 he obtained the first prize for learning in his class; but was, at the same time, publicly reprimanded for his too glaring irregularities.

At that age, to innocent and noble minds, led astray by volatility or seduction, the publication of

their errors is generally the worst of all chastisements, and produces immediate reform. A boy of thirteen who shows no repentance for a fault with which he is reproached among his youthful companions, whose good opinion shame as well as emulation should induce him to regain, when arrived at manhood seldom regards what his contemporaries say or think of his committing a crime to gratify a passion: when the youth wants modesty, the man rarely possesses honour and virtue.

Talleyrand, instead of returning to the path of duty, continued his course of wickedness. During the Easter week, 1768, in company with some debauched associates, he was involved in a quarrel with some musketeers of the King's household troops; and, in consequence of declining to give one of them the satisfaction demanded, he was thrown from a two-pair-of-stairs window into the street, and both his legs were broken by the fall. Refusing to tell the *guet*—at that time the police soldiers at Paris—his name and place of abode, he was carried to the hospital, Hôtel Dieu, where he remained four days before the superior of the college and his friends could learn what had become of him. The lieutenant-general of the police, influenced by his relatives, gave out that the fracture was produced by accident in the

street, and ordered him to be removed back to the college; but there, by the confession of one of his associates, the real cause was already known, and his re-admission therefore refused.

It has been related that, when he was informed of his disgrace, though lying on a bed of sickness, he flew into a passion, swearing that it should not be for want of his active endeavours and *philosophical* zeal, if, hereafter, Christian teachers and Christian pupils were still found in France; or if Christian churches were not changed into theatres, and Christian colleges into brothels.[1] That he has kept his word, France has experienced, and all Europe can attest.

Talleyrand's father had died two years before, and bequeathed to his son nothing but his high birth. He had, however, recommended this young *vaurien*,[2] as he was called, to his elder brother, the respectable chief of their family, Count de Perigord, who had his nephew secretly brought from the hospital to his palace in the Rue de l'Université, Faubourg St. Germain. In the autumn of the same year he was so far

1 A pamphlet printed by Duchesne at Paris, in 1789, called *La Vie Laïque et Ecclésiastique de Monseigneur l'Evêque d'Autun*, contains all the particulars of Talleyrand's early life: see pp. 4, 5 and 6.

2 *Vaurien* signifies literally a good-for-nothing fellow.

recovered as to be put under the care of the same governor, with his first cousin, the Prince de Chalay, a nobleman equally good and loyal, and whose worthy brother, the Viscount Saint-Albert, has since married an English lady. The governor, Fouquet, soon observed that, notwithstanding the brightness of Talleyrand's genius, his most difficult task would be with this pupil. Vicious propensities prematurely discovered themselves in the study, in their walks, at table, and in the drawing-room. Mischievous as a wicked boy, he was perverse as an accomplished villain, nicknamed among the French fashionables, "un aimable roué." By turns he duped his cousin by his art, and deceived the governor by his duplicity. He reigned over the former by his superior capacity, and often ruled the latter by an hypocrisy above his age, so perfect as to be mistaken for ingenuousness. Whenever he could get out alone, the brothel and the gambling-house were his usual places of resort. To indulge his extravagance, he robbed his cousin of his pocket-money, his governor of his books, and even made free with the scanty purses of their servants; but always in such a manner as to continue undiscovered, if not unsuspected. It was in 1770 that a scheme of infamy was first detected which would have done honour

to the heads and hearts of all the rebellious brigands who, from Mirabeau to Bonaparte, have since figured upon the revolutionary stage of France.

In the vicinity of Count de Perigord's palace resided, in the Rue de Bacq, Madame Gauchier, a widow with five children, three of whom were daughters. Her husband, a Swiss by birth, had early entered the French service, and from his merit had risen from the ranks to be a captain, and Knight of the Order of St. Louis. After being wounded in Germany during the Seven Years' War, he survived the peace of 1763, which concluded it, only two years. The scanty pension allowed his widow by Government was not sufficient to support her family; she, therefore, became a mantua-maker, and brought up her daughters to the same trade. Their industry and regularity were the common topics of conversation, and the admiration of all their good neighbours, until the spring of 1769, when, on a fatal day, the charms of the girls excited the attention and desire of the young debauchee, Talleyrand. Poor and artless, by splendid presents and brilliant offers their innocence was soon allured into the insidious snares of seduction. In a few months Maria and Amy, the one aged eighteen, the other sixteen, were likely to

become mothers, and were persuaded by their base seducer to take some drugs in order to prevent public shame. Of what ingredients these drugs were composed is best known to Talleyrand; but so dreadful were their effects, that they immediately deprived Amy of life, and Maria of her reason; and the wretched mother accompanied, on the same day, one of her daughters to the grave and the other to a mad-house! So little did she suspect the real author of her misery, that she continued to receive, with distinction, the visits of the assassin; consulted him as a friend, and revered him as a benefactor. She had, however, soon occasion to repent of her simplicity, and to deplore her ignorance. Her third daughter, Sophia, on her fourteenth birthday, during the carnival of 1770, eloped from her distressed parent. After much fruitless search, the police was applied to; but in such a manner had Talleyrand planned the retreat of his new victim that, until midsummer, the police spies could not find out her place of concealment; and had not the female accomplice in whom he trusted betrayed his secret, they probably would never have succeeded.

Among other virtuous persons feeling for the sufferings and interesting themselves in behalf of the

unfortunate Madame Gauchier, the humane and generous Duke of Penthievre was the foremost; he offered a reward of 3,000 livres (£125) to any person who should discover the abode of the lost child. This sum was too strong a temptation for the woman in whose house and under whose care the girl had resided in the Rue St. Antoine to resist; and poor Sophia Gauchier was taken in the arms of her seducer. In her room were discovered medicines which, after being examined and compared with the drugs found in the corpse of the poisoned Amy, leave little doubt who was the real perpetrator of that crime; who, besides, from juvenile indiscretion, or depraved vanity, had boasted of his intrigues with the two elder sisters, and gloried in their ruin, as well as in that of the youngest. At the recommendation, and under the protection of the Duke of Penthievre, Sophia was received in the Convent of the Ursulines, in the Bois de Boulogne, near Paris; where, notwithstanding the tender attention and religious consolation of the abbess, she shortly afterwards expired. Her death was, in two days, followed by that of her mother, from a broken heart, and the same tomb contained them both. Talleyrand had hardly finished the first year of his fourth lustrum when these

atrocious deeds were committed, the perpetration of which afforded a fatal presage of the cool and deliberate crimes since committed by the parricide and apostate bishop, by the regicide and revolutionary minister.

When Count de Perigord was informed of his nephew's consummate infamy, a family council was convoked: some wished to have the young monster sent away and exiled to the colonies for life; whilst others, not to expose the honour of their name by new atrocities in new climates, proposed a petition to the King for a *lettre-de-cachet*. This was obtained; and in October, 1770, Talleyrand was seized at a gambling-house in the Palais Royal, and confined in the Bastille, under the name of Abbé Boiteux. From this State prison he was in the following December removed to the Castle of Vincennes, where he continued in solitary confinement for twelve months.

Factious, discontented or deluded persons of all countries have never ceased to declaim against these sort of arbitrary imprisonments under monarchy in France, although they must know that the ruins of one Bastille have produced hundreds of Republican State dungeons; for one individual detained by Royal *lettres-de-cachet*, thousands have already

suffered, and still suffer, from the effects of the cruel *mandats d'arrêt* of Republican tyranny. On the 14th of July, 1789, when a rebellious mob surprised the Bastille—that is to say, at a juncture when so many seditious practices, plots, libels and dangers might have induced the French Government to have had recourse to that means of repressing its enemies—there were but *five* prisoners found in that State prison; of these, three were guilty of monstrous crimes, which, from their nature, were deemed dangerous to be made public; the other two, had they been arraigned in a court of justice, would have been much more severely punished. It was, no doubt, an abuse to remove them from their proper judges; but it was an abuse that had not fallen on *innocent victims*. Neither these prisoners, nor any that were confined in other State prisons, dared to make use of their liberty, of the anarchy that prevailed, or of the partiality of the National Assembly, to apply for an enquiry, a legal trial, and indemnification; although this Assembly encouraged them to do it, by appointing a committee of *lettres-de-cachet*, in which Mirabeau figured as president. Can it be supposed that if there had been any innocent persons among the prisoners who had recovered their liberty, that the Court would have escaped from being solemnly

accused of the injustice it had committed? Let conspirators, innovators, *reformers* and declaimers remember this; and that to the use of *lettres-de-cachet*, odious as they regard it, they are indebted for the existence of their two revolutionary heroes, Mirabeau and Talleyrand, who, without this ill-timed lenity of Louis XVI. would, long before the French Rebellion, have deservedly expiated their enormities on a gibbet!

While in prison, Talleyrand, instead of contemplating his offences against society with contrition, employed his innate hypocrisy to contrive some means for obtaining his liberty. The chaplain of the Castle of Vincennes visited him in the double capacity of a comforter and instructor, and was the only person permitted to visit him; with this priest he regularly read, prayed, sighed and wept. He often inflicted severe penances on himself, and even expressed a desire of entering the order La Trappe, the most rigid of all monastic institutions. These devout acts convinced the simple chaplain of a perfect reform, who, in consequence, assured the Count de Perigord, in a letter, that "the life of the young Abbé was not only that of repentance, but of edification." Upon this assurance the doors of the prison were opened, and he was sent to finish his studies with

the Jesuits of Toulouse, where, in 1773, he was received a member of the Gallican clergy, by the famous Bishop Lomenie de Brienne, afterwards so notorious in the annals of French rebellion for his religious and political apostacy, under the title of Cardinal de Brienne, Bishop of Sens.

Very soon after his release, Talleyrand became a great favourite with Madame du Barry, the mistress of Louis XV., and with other young debauchees he was the constant attendant at her toilette in the morning and in her boudoirs in the evening. He is even said to have been admitted into her private parties and most *confidential* coteries; in one of which he, by her recommendation, obtained from Louis XV. two abbeys, worth £1,000 per year, and the reversion of the bishopric of Autun; or, which is the same thing, the King's letters patent to succeed to that see at the first vacancy.

The courtiers who composed the female part of Madame du Barry's society were both loose in their conduct and corrupt in their moral and religious notions. To speak of modesty, to praise virtue and to extol religion was a certain signal of exclusion from her court. This woman, who, from the vilest origin, had become the mistress, and expected to be the wife of a King, had the audacious blasphemy

often to repeat, "that, next to devotion, she hated the chastity of her own sex; and that, so far as it lay in her power, she should let those feel a hell upon earth who hoped for a heaven hereafter." A man of Talleyrand's principles could not, therefore, be placed in a circle composed of ladies more in unison with, or more agreeable to, his own sentiments. Here was organised a true community of vice, and a republic founded upon equality of corruption, fraternity in debauchery, and uninterrupted liberty in all the pains or pleasures of licentiousness and intemperance. At the *petits soupers* in the *petites maisons*, or pavilions, none but the initiated were admitted; but when once admitted, their refinement in voluptuousness confused or obscured the light of reason and silenced the clamour of conscience.

Such scandalous behaviour may be admired, and such sacrilegious language may please the immoral and unprincipled French, notwithstanding the warning and lashes of chastisement they have felt from the iron rods placed by Providence in the hands of a Robespierre, of a Marat, of a Barras, of a Bonaparte, and of other sanguinary rebels. But it would be an eternal reproach to a loyal English writer to notice it without reprobation, and without informing his readers that most of the persons whose example and

depravity excite such horror and disgust have, during the contests of criminal faction since the Revolution, either perished by their own hands, or by the hands of each other. And whilst the pure victims of successful rebellion have encountered death, not only with resignation, but with courage, they have shown themselves as dastardly in their degradation as they have been vile and debased during their prosperity. Count du Barry and his wife, Madame du Barry, were guillotined cursing and struggling with their executioners; but the virtuous Louis XVI. and his immaculate sister, the Princess Elizabeth, died forgiving their persecutors and praying for their assassins. They ascended the scaffold to resign life with the same calm submission to the will of their Creator as they had descended from their palace to exchange their crowns for the fetters of rebellion.

Although the measure of Talleyrand's iniquities seems not yet full, the death of his guilty companions was preferable to his agitated and oppressed existence. When the whims or passions of his capricious and unmerciful master command, he is forced to lay aside, not only understanding, but common sense. The French slave trembles more at the frowns of a Corsican tyrant than the Abyssinian mute at those of a Turkish sultan.

The favour of Madame du Barry was a sure letter of introduction to all other gay and fashionable companies in the French capital. Talleyrand, therefore, no longer found it necessary to stoop to intrigues with obscure mantua-makers. "Duchesses, marchionesses, countesses, and baronesses were, according to his modest expressions, dying by scores in love for him, or quarrelling with emulation to be the happy mortal that could fix their accomplished but volatile beau. During five years, he said that — noting with mathematical precision his crimes and his debaucheries — six husbands, from jealousy on his account, had blown out their brains, and eighteen lovers had perished in duels for ladies who were his mistresses; ten wives, deserted by him, had retired in despair to convents; twelve unmarried ladies, from doubt of his fidelity or constancy, had either broken their hearts, or poisoned themselves in desperation. All these were persons of *haut ton;* and in their number he did not, therefore, include the hundreds of the *bourgeoises* who, forsaken by him, sought consolation from a halter, or in the River Seine!"[1]

1 See the last-mentioned pamphlet, pp. 28 and 29. The above, though a literal translation, would not have been noticed had not the author often heard in France nearly the same absurd expressions of boasts from persons not possessing half the pretensions of Talleyrand.

Foreigners who have not travelled in France, or who have not had the misfortune to be plagued with such ridiculous bombast and such impertinent vauntings of French *petits maîtres*, can hardly conceive an idea of their insufferable and puerile vanity but by mixing a little with the society of men of gaiety, who pretend to be the favourites of women, they will experience, in France, as a reality, what in other countries must be supposed an improbability as well as an absurdity and disgrace. But what will surprise a stranger in France more than anything else, after listening to the jargon of these amorous gasconaders, he may, upon enquiry, be convinced that they are very agreeable to the French ladies; and, therefore, the most impudently lying intriguer, or the most indiscreet gallant, is always the most fashionable, and often the most favoured lover.

In the many pamphlets published against Talleyrand in the beginning of the Revolution, exposing his scandalous and anti-episcopal life to public animadversion, several ladies, yet alive, are mentioned, whose morals he had corrupted, whose favours he had shared, whose money he had borrowed, whose property he had squandered, and whose husbands, after dishonouring, he had ruined. In some houses his dignity in the Church, and in

others his wit, procured him admission; but wherever he visited, some female or other became the victim of his artifice and libertinism; and in most houses he carried on two or three intrigues at the same time. In the spring of 1780 the young wife of President de M——, his daughter, by a former marriage, and his sister-in-law, who had just left the convent where she had been educated, were, by their mutual jealousy and disagreement, all three discovered intriguing with him. The President, in consequence, separated from his wife, married his daughter to his secretary, and obliged his sister-in-law to take the veil in the convent of the Carmelites at Lisle, in Flanders. Like a true French intriguer, the noise this scandal made only served to flatter his vanity; and after being envied by some, applauded by many, and reprobated scarcely by any, he retired for four months to Autun, "in order," as he said, "that the regret occasioned by his absence might at his return the more easily procure him fresh laurels in his campaigns in the Parisian boudoirs."

In this retreat he was followed, in some weeks, by the Marchioness de C——n, who, under pretence of visiting an estate of her husband's in Burgundy, expected to give an agreeable surprise

to her *bon ami* the Bishop. Notwithstanding the haste she made, she did not find him the staunch misanthrope of the stoical sect meditating in solitude on the insignificance of human existence, but the voluptuous philosopher of the Epicurean school, surrounded with beauties that would not have disgraced the seraglio of a pasha. Hardly a woman of the diocese of Autun, having any pretensions to beauty or fashion, neglected this opportunity of the presence of their pastor among them to pay him their personal devoirs. Their poor husbands, fathers and brothers could not oppose these dutiful acts of respect and piety, dictated perhaps by their devotion. The Marchioness was regarded by those Burgundy ladies as an intruder, and they in their turn were treated by her with that easy contempt which Court and fashionable ladies know how to bestow so well and so gracefully on those whose education in the country often makes them equally awkward in showing their jealousy, in expressing their friendship, or in publishing their hatred. Her pointed sallies and ready wit soon drove her rivals from the field of battle, and her triumph would have been complete had not another more dangerous enemy presented herself. Madame de M——, the separated wife of President de M——, suddenly made her appearance.

Her sufferings for his sake were claims her seducer seemed to acknowledge by receiving her with open arms. The Marchioness, instead of combating this new foe, entered into a negotiation with her, which was, however, interrupted by the discovery of an intrigue between Talleyrand and the landlady of an inn at Autun, called Petit Versailles; and the ladies had the mortification to find that he had declared their charms inferior to those of the hostess.

Mortifications and humiliations of this sort French women never pardon, and the allied ladies instantly returned to the capital. As soon as they arrived, the coarse and unseemly taste of Talleyrand was their sole topic of conversation. They painted his faithless gallantry and degrading conduct in such glowing colours that those Parisian ladies who had to complain of, or who suspected his inconstancy, sent him letters to forbid him their company; whilst others still attached to him, wrote that his presence was absolutely necessary to retrieve his lost reputation.

The revenge of Talleyrand was neither generous, manly nor gallant; and though it humiliated his enemies, made him, for the future, the favourite of the fashionable females, rather through fear of the malice of his wit than from attachment to his person or

from admiration of his conversation. He, therefore, soon experienced that he was no longer regarded as the agreeable companion, but dreaded as the relentless satirist of the boudoirs, where restraint or affectation ever afterwards entered and remained with him.

Previous to his return, "to clear the ground," as he is reported to have expressed himself, he sent to the old and malignant Duchess de B—vais, an illiberal and indelicate epigram against his two female foes. He was well aware of the gratification he afforded this lady, who, renounced by society and deserted by her beauty, found no greater pleasure than to tease, vex and humiliate those who, from youth or accomplishments, might still hope for sway in the circle of fashion, and therefore, though secrecy was recommended, publicity was certain.

He was not deceived in his expectations; his epigram was soon in the hands of everyone, and everyone knew to whom it alluded, while its effect was heightened by a feeble attempt at reply, made by some well-meaning but misjudging friend of the Marchioness.

Although Talleyrand had the advantage of his offended mistresses thus far, the means he took to

obtain it were neither honourable nor was his triumph of long duration, for he was very soon assailed from a quarter and in a manner he little expected. The Marchioness had from his own mouth heard of his base behaviour to the daughters of Madame Gauchier, and, after many enquiries, found that their eldest brother was an adjutant in the Swiss regiment *Chateaux-vieux*, quartered at Nancy. By a confidential person, she informed him of the outrages committed upon his family by Talleyrand, instigating him to revenge, and promising all the support in the power of herself and friends. She advanced him money to proceed to Paris, where she procured him lodgings in her neighbourhood. She instructed him how to conduct himself with caution, yet with efficacy, and how to punish the offender without endangering his own safety. He accordingly went to Talleyrand, and, after coolly relating his complaints, demanded £4,000 for not proceeding against him at the tribunals, or petitioning to his temporal and spiritual sovereigns the King of France and the Pope of Rome. Talleyrand, after exculpating himself as well as he could for this *étourderie de la jeunesse*, or indiscretion of youth, as he affected to term it, offered Gauchier a present of twenty-five louis d'or, on condition that he would return to

his regiment and never more mention this *bagatelle*. This offer was, of course, rejected with indignation and disdain.

From the determined language of the young man, he suspected, however, some secret instructor behind the curtain. To disappoint them both, he went to the War Office, and, under some specious pretext, or by means of bribes, obtained an order for Gauchier, enjoining him to quit Paris in five hours and to be with his regiment within six days. The Marchioness, with the assistance of her friends, got this order revoked; and the next day Gauchier delivered a petition to the Pope's Nuncio, informing him that another, to the same purport, would be presented to the King.

The good Louis XVI. was not entirely ignorant of the vicious life of Talleyrand, and it had required all the influence of his family to obtain from this Monarch his appointment to the see of Autun; and they would probably not have succeeded in their efforts had not this Prince, as religious as he was virtuous, considered it a duty to do honour to the presentation of his grandfather by giving it his approbation. It is not hazardous to suppose that, if any crimes could be proved to have been committed by Talleyrand, neither his dignity in the

Church, nor his noble birth, could be expected to avert public justice or to prevent it from taking its course. To this he was no stranger, and the communication of Gauchier's memorial from the Papal Nuncio, therefore, both humbled and alarmed him. By pecuniary sacrifices he might have hushed this disagreeable affair, but his extravagance with women, his profusion with men, want of order in his domestic concerns, and losses at the gambling-tables, had exhausted all his resources, and he possessed as little credit as honour or honesty. He sent, however, for Gauchier, who with much difficulty was persuaded at last to withdraw the petition from the Nuncio, and to sign a promise of secrecy and oblivion, and received a bond for the sum demanded. Two days afterwards this young man was taken up dead from the nets (*filets*) of St. Cloud, having been robbed, stabbed, and thrown into the Seine.[1]

The Marchioness de C——n, in advising Gauchier to ask for a sum of money, knew very well the deranged situation of Talleyrand's finances; and as

1 It is said that the lieutenant of the police at Paris, Le Noir, was convinced that Gauchier had been murdered by Talleyrand's *valet-de-chambre*, Le Flamand. Gauchier's youngest brother served in the Swiss Guards, and was killed on the 10th of August, 1792, in defending the castle of the Tuileries against the Parisian rebels and banditti.

his ruin was her only object, a bond he would be unable to pay was the most useful instrument in her hands, where it had been deposited as a security for a sum of £500, which she lent the young man to purchase a commission in the dragoon regiment of Schomberg, to the Colonel of which (her relation) she had given him strong letters of recommendation. All this money, and all these papers, were probably in Gauchier's pocket when he was assassinated, as they were searched for in his lodgings without success. His death was first announced to her in a note from Talleyrand, requesting an interview, and stating that his information came from the police. She agreed to his request in hopes that from his conversation she might find some evidence to implicate him in Gauchier's murder. To effect this she took the precaution to conceal two persons in a closet adjoining her saloon, where they could see and hear everything that passed. But she had to deal with a man as artful as he was unconscionable, as suspicious as he was wicked. At the three first interviews nothing was expressed on his part but apologies and regrets for the misfortune he deplored of having given her offence. Not a word of Gauchier! except what was contained in his note. He only hinted, *en passant*, that "he had

conversed with his friend, the Colonel, to whom she had recommended the *adventurer*, and heard from him of her interesting herself in his behalf, which occasioned him to mention his untimely death in the note."

Observing that her reserve decreased as his visits were repeated, Talleyrand affected more tenderness than ever, and was gratified by seeing her former passion for him revive. Again deceived by his duplicity, a perfect reconciliation took place on her part; and, to convince him of her sincerity, she even went so far, in an unguarded moment, as to burn before his eyes the bond given to Gauchier. This imprudent act of kindness, by discovering her connection with Gauchier, only added fresh fuel to his former hatred. But, though he had determined upon her exposure and destruction, he continued to visit her with seemingly increased affection. Unsuspectingly, she pressed a serpent to her bosom, who was only watching an opportunity to sting it with increased venom, and render the wound he was about to inflict worse than a death-blow.[1]

The Marquis de C—— was twenty-five years

1 It is related as a fact that, during the three months the Marchioness was Talleyrand's dupe, before she became his victim, she lent him, *upon his parole*, £6,000, which he afterwards denied.

older than the Marchioness. He had married her, not from love or esteem, but because her fortune was sufficient to pay off the mortgages on his estates. He was not apt to be jealous, nor did he care about her intrigues; but he hated publicity, and feared the ridicule resulting from it. Talleyrand, the better to conceal his numerous intrigues, had, under the names of different persons, taken six apartments in different parts of Paris. His usual place of appointment with the Marchioness was a first floor in the Faubourg St. Honoré, hired by his *valet-de-chambre*, and in his own name. Knowing, one night, that her husband supped in this vicinity, he carried her there from the opera. After a short supper, on some pretext or other, he made an excuse to absent himself for an hour. The Marchioness went to bed, and extinguished the taper, as was her custom, lights being always in the ante-chamber. As soon as she was asleep, a person laid himself down by her side. In the midst of her rest, she was suddenly awakened by a noise from the street, where some persons were fighting. The assailant, after being accused of having wounded his opponent, sought refuge in this house,

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This affair occurred in the month of May, 1783, and the Marchioness and Talleyrand left Paris for their respective exiles on the same day, the 20th.

where he was followed both by the police guards and by the mob. Under an idea that the assassin had entered the room where the Marchioness slept, the door was forced open, and she, together with her bedfellow, who was no other than Talleyrand's *valet-de-chambre*, Le Flamand, was arrested. Her surprise, her protestations, her tears and her indignation availed nothing. She was on the point of being dragged, half-naked, to prison, when her husband, informed by an *unknown* hand, of her perilous situation, made his appearance just *à propos* to prevent all further disgrace and *éclat*. The next day a deed of separation was signed between the Marquis and his lady, wherein it was agreed she should receive an annual pension, and bind herself to travel abroad and not revisit France during her husband's life. The scandal of this plot and treachery became too notorious not to reach the ears of Louis XVI. By his Majesty's command, Talleyrand, after being reprimanded by the Pope's Nuncio in the presence of the Archbishop of Paris, was put under the escort of two *gardes de corps*, carried back to Autun, and ordered, under pain of having his episcopal gown torn off, not to leave his diocese without the King's permission. His tool and accomplice, Le Flamand, was shut up in the house of correction, called *Bicêtre*, after signing a confession of

his guilt, which he said had been perpetrated by the desire of his master.[1]

On this subject the Court and the town were of the same opinion. Both reprobated the man and abhorred the priest who, under the mask of friendship and profession of affection, used his superior understanding and unsuspected art to ruin, in such an infamous manner, a lady whose greatest fault was her love for him, and who, had it not been for his seduction, would never have ceased to merit the esteem due to an irreproachable life. Talleyrand was the Marchioness's first and only lover. He found her innocent, and she did not long survive her dishonour. On quitting France, she went to Italy and became a pensioner in a convent at Pavia, where she died after a residence of eighteen weeks. Her contrition, her piety and her death were announced by the Abbess to the Marquis in terms that will always, in the opinion of the mild and forgiving Christian, do honour to her memory. "If her life had been that of a sinner,"

1 Le Flamand was, in September 1792, one of the assassins of the prisoners at Paris, and afterwards an aide-de-camp to Santerre, and is now a colonel in Bonaparte's service. See *Les Nouvelles à la Main*, Ventose, year xii., p. 6. Fouquet, Talleyrand's former tutor, was one of the prisoners murdered in the Abbey prison, 1792.

according to the words of the Abbess, "her death was that of a saint."[1]

It is said that the Marquis sent Talleyrand a copy of the Abbess's letter, and was answered by this consummate hypocrite, "that ever since their separation his prayers for her conversion had accompanied her, and he flattered himself with the hope that they had not been ineffectual. As to him, all his thoughts were fixed on the other world; and his sole study in this should be, for the future, to set the flock entrusted to his care examples of devotion worthy the high and holy dignity with which he had been honoured." Such was his language to an offended and insulted husband. How widely different from his public life at Autun, and his private correspondence afterwards with another mistress of his, the witty, lively and accomplished Countess of Flahault! to whom he wrote from Versailles, under date of the 4th of December, 1787, that "the two years of his exile at Autun were total blanks in his existence." "Never, however," continued he, "was any heart more tender, or more

1 It is said that Madame de M—— died of a broken heart in a convent at Amiens in the same month that the Marchioness died at Pavia, and that Talleyrand made another epigram on this occasion too infamous to be transcribed.

deserving a female friend's consolation for the eternal *ennui* it was forced to endure. My disgrace at Court certainly influenced the behaviour of the females in my diocese towards me greatly; but this I did not much regret, for none of them had left any impression but of disgust." In another letter to this lady from the same place, dated February 15th, 1788, he writes: "You ask me where I first became acquainted with the young Baroness? In my cathedral, my friend! in the confessional, during my late tiresome exile at Autun. Her *naïveté* pleased me, and I therefore invited her father, who is a widower and a true country squire, and his daughter to pass a few days during Lent in my palace. I asked her, when alone, if she loved! Without hesitation she replied, 'With all my heart I love my Saviour!' 'And do you not love me?' 'Yes, as His representative and my *guide* to heaven!' By such unmeaning nonsense I easily perceived that nothing was to be done, or that it would take up more of my time to do anything than I could conveniently spare. She finished her *tête-à-tête* by demanding my blessing, and, taking her breviary from her pocket, asked me to point out those prayers which were most efficacious to resist the devil's temptations. This I did; but I am sorry to say the devil got the better of her,

and they had not the desired effect; as I am informed she married the old Baron only because she was pregnant by her father's footman."

During his exile, Talleyrand wrote a memorial against the ex-minister Necker's financial arrangements, which he dedicated and sent to M. Calonne, who, with great difficulty, procured the King's permission for him to pass some few months in the capital. A man who deceives or betrays his mistress can never be faithful to his friend, or grateful to his benefactor. No sooner did M. de Calonne's favour at Court decline than Talleyrand libelled this minister, and published a refutation of his own memorial. This refutation, though anonymous as well as the memorial, was his first introduction to the Necker family, whom he some years afterwards betrayed, calumniated and deserted in their turn, when the tide of courtly and plebeian favour ran strong against them.

In 1787, the well-meaning and patriotic Louis XVI. convoked an Assembly of the Notables of his kingdom, an expedient that had often been resorted to during the reigns of Francis I. and Henry IV.: but the times were now changed. These Notables, though nominated by the King, proved themselves by their conduct to be ignorant,

weak, selfish, impolitic and seditious. From the labours and reports of this Assembly, the nation, or rather the factious and disaffected, only learned the alarming deficiency of the old taxes, of which they all complained loudly; but not one of them had the magnanimity to propose a certain remedy by recommending "that neither the Clergy nor the Nobility should be any longer exempt from the territorial impost or land-tax." At this period, Talleyrand was very assiduous in paying his respects to Louis XVIII., the present King of France and Navarre, then Monsieur; but it was particularly about the person of the late depraved and ill-advised Duke of Orleans that this sycophant was daily and almost hourly seen, whose confidence he gained, but whose infamy and destruction he likewise prepared.

Both these Princes of the Blood were then popular, because they both, though from very different motives, recommended economy as absolutely necessary to restore order to the finances of their country; and they both blamed the former profusion or corruption of ministers as the only cause of all the disasters and the sufferings of the people, as well as of the embarrassment of their King. The regular, moral, religious, unambitious and severe

Louis XVIII. sincerely wished for a reform, which, by lightening the burdens of the subjects, would increase their affection for their Sovereign. He loved his brother and King; he loved his countrymen and mankind; and he possessed a mind too well-informed not to foresee that, when troubles distracted France, Europe could not remain quiet. He therefore employed all his influence to silence murmurs, to calm apprehension, and to console and relieve distress. The Duke of Orleans, whose private affairs, as well as those of most of his associates, were extremely deranged, was induced to hope that by talking of reform he might be able to effect a revolution; and, during that general overthrow, to find an opportunity of gratifying at once his lust for power and his love of money, his pecuniary wants and his unnatural ambition.

By those who, from a knowledge of his character, observed his conduct, Talleyrand was suspected, after the resignation and retreat of M. de Calonne, of having been paid by the Prime Minister, Cardinal de Brienne, to watch the Parliament, by the Parliament to watch the Court, and by the Court to watch both the Parliament and the Prime Minister. He is said to have professed friendship to the Cardinal, and received bribes from him, at the same time

that he was telling his secrets to his rivals, betraying his plans to his foes, and plotting to supplant him with his friends. The confidence reposed in him by Parliament he employed to involve it in disputes with the Court; and the knowledge he had of the views of the Court was communicated to the leading members of Parliament, to make all reconciliation impossible, that their mutual animosity might finally precipitate both in the same gulf. This abominable treason created a general mistrust, which, after two years of agitations, confusion and discontent, obliged the unfortunate Monarch to convoke those rebels the States-General, to whose crimes the present wretchedness of the world may truly and justly be ascribed, and on whom the curses of the remotest posterity will inevitably fall.

Although Talleyrand's ambition was now rather to figure in the cabinet than in the boudoir, he neglected no occasion to insinuate himself into the favour of the fair sex. "He wanted," as he wrote to the Countess of F——t, "one female companion, whom he could with passion *adore* as a mistress and with safety trust as a friend; who returned his affection, and was worthy of his confidence; who possessed the firm character of a man, with the amiable meekness of a woman; who, in being reason-

able and not passionate, always spoke the language of passion, but never that of reason; who united genius with beauty, but from whose conversation it could not be inferred that she was aware of either the charms of her person or the worth of her mind. All these rare qualities, which I have searched for in vain these twenty years at Court, in cities, and in the provinces; in the palaces of the great, in the hotels of the rich, and in the cots of the humble, dearest Countess! I have found united in you. Let this frank and sincere assurance explain what you call the enigma of my past inconstancy, and serve as a pledge for my future fidelity."

After the ages of chivalrous gallantry had been succeeded by those of indelicate avarice, sensuality and selfishness supplied the place of love, and women began to be bought or sold like other commodities. France, though ever affecting to despise the name of a commercial country, has long been accustomed, as publicly as Circassia, to dispose of her female youth and beauty to infirmity and decrepitude, if recommended by wealth. There, as in most other *civilised* nations, innocence is sacrificed at the shrine of Plutus, and legal prostitution sanctioned by custom, encouraged by example, and protected by the legislative as well as by the judicial power. The proverbial

licentiousness of both sexes in France originates in nothing else. When women are certain of not being beloved, they lose all esteem of themselves. Their natural sensibility is soon changed into dangerous sensuality, and they gratify their passions because they are unable to please their hearts. Such is the influence of the sexes on each other, that in no country do we find one corrupt and vicious and the other moral and virtuous. But the continuance and progress of depravity may, in a great measure, be ascribed to men, as possessing most power. Did all fathers agree in ceasing to usurp an unnatural authority over their children, but guide instead of commanding their choice of partners for life, the whim or opposition of mothers would avail nothing. Some indiscreet matches might, perhaps, be concluded; but the celebration of nuptials would, in general, be those of love and affection, and the torch of Hymen would no more expose to pity or shame human victims dragged to his altar as criminals to the scaffold.

According to a calculation in an *exposé* of the late French Minister for the Interior, Chaptal, "from 1792, when the regicide National Convention decreed its law for *easy* divorces, to 1802, or during the ten years' standing of this law, six-eighths of the married

people in the French Republic had taken advantage of it to break their odious, heavy or troublesome fetters. This," continues the same minister, "evinces the necessity of fixing new regulations to put a stop to the unjustifiable and scandalous tyranny of parents, and of regulating a new system for the education of children. When matrimonial infanticides cease, our tribunals will no longer be shocked by pronouncing sentences against vindictive parricides." It were to be wished that France were the only country where similar laws of divorce produce similar effects.

The knowledge which the author had of the particulars of Talleyrand's connection with the Countess of F——t, has induced him to make the above remarks. This lady's irregularities excite rather compassion than censure, being at the age of fifteen given up to the arms of a husband of fifty, whom she saw for the first time on the day she was made his wife. She is descended of noble but poor parents, who had severely felt the want of fortune, and who therefore erroneously concluded that riches alone were necessary for the happiness of their two daughters. Agreeably to this notion, the eldest first left the convent, where she had been educated, on the very morning she was married to the Marquis of Marigni, brother of the famous Madame de

Pompadour, the mistress of Louis XV.; and the youngest did not quit the same retreat, or enter the world at all, till she gave her hand to the Count of F——t. England is the only country where pecuniary damages are the punishment of the adulterer and the indemnity for connubial infidelity. But had an action for *crim. con.*, the consequence of a similar match, been brought against the adulterers, an English jury would, no doubt, notwithstanding the clearness of the proofs of criminality, have long hesitated in their determination. If the husband had a right to prosecute the adulterer in a court of law, who can deny the justice of the wife's cause, were she to bring an action for prostitution against her parents, and for seduction against her husband?[1]

The Count of F——t had in his younger days not led the most regular life. Being early possessed of an ample fortune, he denied himself no sort of pleasure, and was equally voluptuous and dissolute. Advancing in years, he pretended to be both a

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1 See *Les Miracles Carnales de St. Charles Evêque d'Autun et Patriarches de la Revolution* (Paris, Mercier, 1792). Many of the particulars related here and in the following pages, concerning the Count and Countess of F——t, the author heard both from Talleyrand and from the Countess herself.

patron of men of letters and a savant himself. This made him acquainted with the Marquis of Marigni, who kept an open table, where all persons distinguished for their learning, or for their love of literature, were admitted. It was there he first heard of his wife. Desirous of adding the ties of consanguinity to those of friendship, he proposed himself to the Marquis for a brother-in-law, and in twenty-four hours he was married by Talleyrand de Perigord, Bishop of Autun. The Count, more entertained among his books in his private study than with the harmless sallies of his wife in her boudoir, left her at full liberty there to receive the company she liked best.

When Talleyrand meditates the gratification of his passions, his manners with either sex are insinuating, and his conversation agreeable. Vain of his birth, and presuming on his capacity, he generally makes those about him feel his consequence, and usurps a superiority, always humiliating, and often insupportable. When, therefore, his behaviour and language change, and he descends from being the tyrant to become the companion of his associates or visitors, let them be on their guard! In their number is certainly some person he intends to deceive, to degrade, or to ruin.

Unexperienced and artless as the Countess was, he had little difficulty in making a favourable impression on her mind. Her husband, for the three first years of their marriage, seldom saw his wife but at meals, and not always then; while Talleyrand followed her almost as her shadow, amused her when at home, and attended her abroad, to church, in her walks, to concerts, to balls and to plays. Though the motives of the lover are blamable, the neglect of the husband was inexcusable. Talleyrand indeed seduced her from her duty; but, according to her own confession, he preserved her from becoming the talk and scandal of the town by imitating the depraved examples of many ladies of her acquaintance and society, who changed their lovers almost as often as their dress.

Until his wife had been delivered of a son, during his absence in the country with the Marquis of Marigni, the Count lived as if he still had been a bachelor. At his arrival in town, this son was already christened Charles, by Charles M. Talleyrand. This haste, and this name, with some other circumstances, awakened the Count's jealousy, or rather, alarmed his pride.

The ingenuous young Countess concealed from nobody that this child was called after, and baptised

by, his father.[1] The Bishop, therefore, was desired to discontinue his visits, and the Count carried his lady one hundred and fifty miles from Paris, to an estate, where she continued to correspond with her lover, who advised her to conceal her chagrin as the surest means of shortening their separation.

The Count of F——t, entirely engrossed by learned researches, in conversing with his wife, was agreeably surprised to discover in her, for the first time after four years' marriage, not only genius, but a genius highly improved by reading; and, upon enquiry, found that he was indebted to her lover for these and other accomplishments. This lessened, in his philosophical eyes, their mutual offence; and as the Countess, always guided by Talleyrand, conducted herself so as to regain the confidence of her husband, she was, after

1 See *La Nouvelle Chronique Scandaleuse*, vol. iii., p. 6, and *Les Miracles Carnales, &c.*, p. 18. This son came over to this country in 1792, with his mother, and was deaf. By the generosity of Mr. Burke, Mr. Windham, and other gentlemen, who with so much humanity interested themselves for the unfortunate emigrants, he was taken care of at an emigrant free school, cured of his complaint, and educated until 1799, when he returned to France, and by Talleyrand's recommendation was made an aide-de-camp to Louis Bonaparte, in which capacity he accompanied him to Berlin in 1800. Count de F——t, trusting to Talleyrand's spy, Mehée de la Touche, was betrayed by him, and guillotined in 1793. Charles de F——t is expected to be the heir to Talleyrand's immense fortune, as an *indemnity*, no doubt, for his birth and the murder of his mother's husband.

four months' absence, restored to the capital. By being more prudent or discreet, and by humouring the Count by associating with him in his favourite occupation among his books, she imperceptibly acquired useful knowledge, and shortly recovered her former liberty of associating with her lover, whose insinuation so gained upon the Count, that, in a few weeks, he was as much regarded by the husband as he was beloved by the wife.

The deranged state of Talleyrand's finances, his passion for gambling as well as for women, brought him frequently into disagreeable difficulties, and obliged him to resort to expedients not always honest or honourable. The first proof he demanded of the Count's friendship was a loan of £2,500, for the purpose of paying off an execution in his house. Financial considerations usually accompanied, and were almost inseparable from, his amorous intrigues. He had no mistress to whom, or to whose husband, he was not indebted for pecuniary assistance, whose purse, as well as reputation, he had not attempted to ruin. Never delicate in procuring himself money, it was nothing to him if his mistress, in consequence, reduced herself to distress; or if, in supplying his extravagance, she suffered in her credit and character. Selfish in love as well as in friendship, if his passions

were satisfied he was indifferent whether his pleasures were purchased at the expense of the honour of his mistress or of the happiness of his friend.

The five years before the Revolution which he passed as the *bon ami* of the Countess of F——t, he called *sa vie reglée*, or that period of his life when he was most regular, having no other *known* mistress except the wife of the rich banker, G——, who died, poisoned either by herself on discovering Talleyrand's infidelity, after robbing her husband of £8,000 for a promise to serve him, or by Talleyrand, in order to get rid of his obligation and to bury his debt in oblivion, or by the husband from revenge or jealousy. Talleyrand breakfasted with her on the day of her death, and they were heard to quarrel. Immediately after he went away the husband entered, and had some high words with her. In a quarter-of-an-hour afterwards, when her maid was dressing her, she suddenly changed colour, fell down and expired, exclaiming, "Je suis empoisonnée!"[1]

1 See *La Politique d'un Indigne Périgord*, pp. 33 and 34; and *La Nouvelle Chronique Scandaleuse*, vol. iii., p. 8. In the note it is said that the husband by money prevented the police from enquiring into the particulars of this death; but that he afterwards challenged Talleyrand, who refused to fight, and was, therefore, publicly caned by him in the Rue de Vivienne, near the Palais Royal.

Not satisfied with borrowing, or rather swindling, money from his mistresses, he had, several years before the Revolution, associated himself with some brokers, stock-jobbers and usurers, for the purpose of making speculations in the public funds, and of lending money to young spendthrifts, masters of, or heirs to, large fortunes. But he was yet a novice among the French financial rogues, who enriched themselves by using his name and abusing his connections, and, in leaving him to bear their losses without sharing their profit, involved him in fresh debts, according to report, to the amount of £50,000. Despised and overwhelmed with debt, the Duke of Orleans and his party seemed to be his only resource—a resource that was always open to political adventurers of vicious propensities, of desperate fortunes, or of degraded characters. By engaging in acts and deeds so opposite to his duty as a prelate, and so disgraceful to him as a nobleman, he was forbidden the Court and the presence of his relatives; and the Revolution found him equally destitute of property and probity, with the loss of the favour of his Sovereign, of the affection and regard of his family, and of the esteem of every good man among his contemporaries.

Many are supposed to be the causes of a Revolution in which Talleyrand has played such a conspicuous part. But its origin, crimes and progress may, with most colour of probability, be ascribed to a secret, sophistical and anti-religious sect, long nourished in the academies and cities of France and other continental dominions, connected with numerous societies through all parts of Europe, meditating a total or partial abolition of the existing laws, customs and modes of public worship, and projecting an entirely new distribution of power among nations, a universal change of dynasties, with a general overthrow of all established authorities. The existence and machinations of such a sect are rendered indisputable by the researches of Abbé Barruel, Professor Robison and other modern authors. The writers and reasoners attached to this sect succeeded in rendering religion ridiculous, and afterwards odious. From the abuses of popery, and the personal vices of some priests, they proceeded to a systematical assault on mysteries and miracles, and from these to the very existence of a God. The attack on governments was managed with more caution, since all nations have prudently confided to their rulers other powers for suppressing attempts against their supremacy than those which, in modern times, have been committed to the

votaries of religion. Governments were, therefore, covertly and cautiously assailed by general declamations in favour of liberty, and on the necessity of reform, by the ostentatious production of the offensive parts of modern history, and by continual contrasts of the present with times past, or the system under which these speculatists lived with that of other nations possessed of greater freedom and less burdens.

In France, the numerous publications of a band who assumed the title of economists, spread general discontent, and inspired a great eagerness to increase the wealth and diminish the burdens of the nation by a rigid and indiscriminate saving. Talleyrand was one of the most subtle and active members of this sect, which carried, by their exhortations and essays, schemes of agricultural speculations into the fields and of commercial and pecuniary fraud into the cities, rendering the people jealous of every species of public reward and repugnant to every mode of taxation. All exemptions were loudly decried, and the maintenance of the Clergy was considered as an enormous political evil. Seignorial rights were reprobated no less as indications of slavery than as impediments to good husbandry; and the expenses of the Court were regarded with peculiar malignity,

as an ostentatious and useless mode of squandering the treasure of the people.[1]

The national and hereditary presumption of most Frenchmen, their overweening but imposing self-importance, their captivating address, their easy readiness of repartee, their quick penetration, their natural and unaffected duplicity, and their artful flexibility to circumstances, have, ever since civilised governments agreed to fix laws and rules of etiquette for a regular communication between the different members of the European commonwealth, made their country renowned for able ministers and dreaded for crafty and immoral intriguers. Spain may be proud of her Ximenes, and Sweden of her Oxenstierna; but these kingdoms have since descended from a primary to a secondary rank, and these great statesmen may therefore be said to have left no posterity; whilst Mazarin, Louvois, Fleury, Choiseul, and other suc-

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1 Since the economists Talleyrand, Roederer, &c., have become Bonaparte's titled slaves, commerce and manufactories are annihilated, taxes increased a hundred-fold, and the expenses of the mock Emperor, during the first year of his usurpation, amounted to 3,000,000 of livres more than the expenses of Louis XVI., his family, and relations, during his eighteen years' reign! The lands are cultivated by old men or women, all young men being sent to the army or navy; such is the effect of the plans of innovators.—*Les Nouvelles à la Main*, Frimaire, year xiii., p. 4.

cessors of Cardinal Richelieu in the direction of the Cabinet of Versailles, have not only prevented the decrease of the real power and relative influence of France, but, by a regular, systematic, though often imperceptible plan, terminated no war, however disastrous, but by some direct or indirect advantage. The Peace of Utrecht, of 1713, settled one branch of the Bourbons in Spain; and even the Peace of Paris, of 1763, was followed by the conquest of Corsica, by civil commotions in Holland, and by an insurrection in America; though England, at that time, could boast of her Chatham, Austria of her Kaunitz, Prussia of her Frederic the Great, Russia of her Catherine II., Sweden of her Gustavus III., and Denmark of her Bernstorff.

These occurrences were chiefly the consequences of the machinations and efforts of inferior intriguers; because, after the resignation of Choiseul in 1770, the ministerial helm of France was in the hands of ignorant or corrupted courtiers that were often governed by profligate prostitutes and scandalous adultresses, their own, or the mistresses of the enervated Louis XV. The ill-advised, well-meaning and good Louis XVI., duped by their hypocritical jargon and *patriotic* rhodomontade, admitted some of these subaltern schemers into his councils. They

promoted their associates, and the offices of Government were soon filled with, and the secrets of State entrusted by turns to, the political sectaries of a St. Germain, of a Turgot, of a De Brienne, and of a Necker, ministers who, as well as Talleyrand, were impolitic, fanatical, or treacherous economists, whose maxims were destined to commence their active and cruel operation during the reign of the best and most virtuous of kings. It was a remarkable fatality, that the very virtues of this amiable and unhappy Prince contributed to his destruction. Every circumstance of his reign, which, according to the calculations of probability, should have given stability to his dominion, tended to its dissolution and his own ruin. His zeal in economical reform, while it diminished the State burdens, and was even supposed sufficient to absorb the expenses of a war without new taxes, tended only to weaken his power by diminishing his influence and removing from the eyes of his vain, fickle and wicked people the splendid pageantry in which they so much delighted, while it left unsatisfied their extravagant expectations of relief from all burdens, and authorised them, from a consideration of what was suppressed, to cavil at that which remained. The American War, in which Louis XVI.

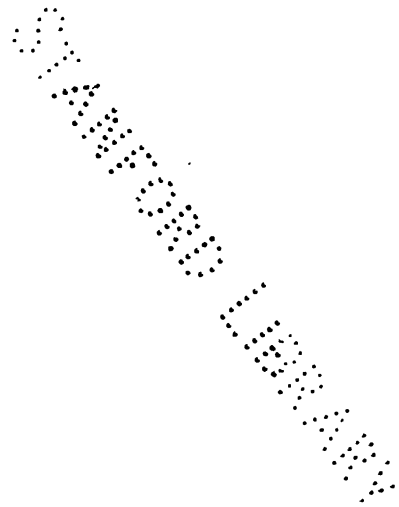
was advised to join and to assist revolted subjects against their legitimate sovereign, was another misfortune productive of the most calamitous consequences. The command of fleets and armies, in a contest destined to carry into execution the schemes of rebellious subjects professedly attempting to found a republic, in which neither titles, hereditary functions nor an established priesthood should find a place, was not given to men of long-tried character and known alliance, but to individuals whose misconduct during the German War had rendered them objects of suspicion, or whose youth and inexperience, joined to presumption and arrogance, proved them, on their return, to be turbulent, factious and dangerous.

The Finance department was at the same time entrusted to the empiric Necker, a French economist, but an alien to the land, an enemy to its religion, and a Republican by principles as well as by birth. He confirmed in an inquisitive and insolent people the habit of examining by general theories, and by garbled statements alone, the expenses and revenues of the State; and when dismissed, his errors and his artifices had equally contributed to involve his successor in difficulty and danger. Thus the American War left France plunged in debt and speculation, open to all the attempts of financial projectors, the

reveries of political reformers, and the assaults of atheistical and republican incendiaries.

When, therefore, the King convoked the States-General in 1789, everything was in a ferment, and all the materials ready to produce a total overthrow; a centre and supplies, the great requisites of a political faction aiming at important achievements, were only wanting, and these were found in Paris, in the wealth, rank, profligacy and turbulence of the Duke of Orleans. This man, himself a member of the Royal family, nourished in his heart an unnatural rancorous antipathy against the reigning branch. Regardless of character, and yet ambitious of fame, he was surrounded by Talleyrand, Mirabeau, Sillery, Sieyes, and other depraved companions and literary parasites, who led him with rapid steps to promote the aims of the anti-religious and anti-social innovators. To the Orleans faction Talleyrand owed his nomination as a deputy to the States-General, since called the Constituent Assembly.

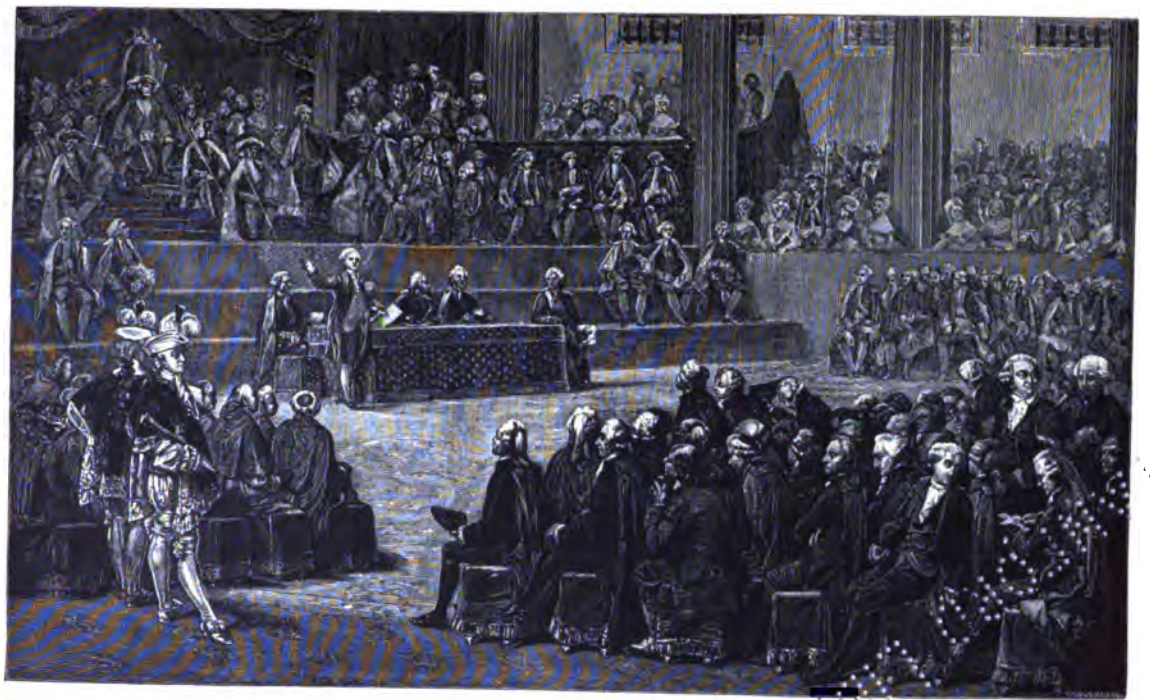
After a lapse of one hundred and seventy-five years, the States-General met at Versailles, on the 5th of May, 1789. The ceremony commenced with an act of devotion. The deputies, preceded by the ministers of the altar and followed by the King, repaired to the temple of the Deity amidst an



Assembly of the General States

After engraving of picture by Auguste Couder at Versailles

Assembly of the German States



NOT FOR CIRCULATION

immense crowd, who offered up vows for the success of their endeavours to reform and regenerate the State. The splendour and variety of the robes of the two Orders added greatly to the brilliancy of the spectacle; for the dignified Clergy were dressed in a style of grandeur suited to their respective ranks, being adorned with scarfs, crosses and crosiers, while the Nobility were decorated, as in the days of chivalry, with flowing mantles, covered with lace, plumes of feathers waving in the air, stars and ribands, calculated to produce a theatrical effect, and swords glittering with gold and diamonds. Alas! these Orders little expected or supposed that this ceremony was their political *auto da fé*, and that the faggots of revolutionary incendiaries were already lighted, and would shortly consume, with their rank, privilege and property, every person of honour and probity within their reach in France!

Having returned to the hall, the King, who was seated in a magnificent alcove, with the Queen on his left hand, and the Princes and Princesses of the Blood around him, delivered an appropriate discourse in a loud and distinct voice, with all the confidence of an orator accustomed to address a numerous assembly. To console the loyal, to confound the disaffected, and to do honour to the memory of the best of

kings, this speech cannot be too often repeated; at least some parts of it should never be excluded by any author writing on the Revolution, faithful to his God and to his King, who detests rebels, and abhors regicides. "The day," said His Majesty, "is at length arrived which my heart has so long panted to behold; and now I find myself surrounded by the representatives of a nation which it is my glory to command. A long interval hath elapsed since the last convocation of the States-General; but although these assemblies have not for some time been held, I have not been dissuaded by the example of my late predecessors from re-establishing a custom by which the nation may earnestly hope to acquire new vigour, and which may be the means of opening to it an additional source of happiness.

"A very general discontent and a too eager desire for innovation have taken hold of the minds of the people, and will end in misleading their judgment if they do not hasten to fix it by wise and moderate counsels. It is in this confidence, gentlemen, that I now assemble you; and I rejoice to think that the measure has been justified by those dispositions which the two first Orders of the State have shown to renounce their own pecuniary privileges. The hope which I have cherished, to see all

the Orders unite and concur with me in wishes for the public good, will, I am certain, not be deceived. I have already ordered very considerable retrenchments in respect to my own expenses; you will, moreover, furnish me with your sentiments on the subject, which I shall receive most gladly; but in spite of the resources which the strictest economy can suggest, I fear, gentlemen, that I shall not be able to relieve my subjects so soon as I could wish.

"The public spirit is in a ferment, but an assembly of the representatives of the nation will certainly hearken to no other counsels than those founded on wisdom and prudence. You yourselves, gentlemen, have been able to judge on many recent occasions that the people have been misguided; but the spirit which will animate your deliberations will also evince the true sentiments of a generous nation, whose distinguished character has been the love of their Prince. I shall banish from me every other sentiment.

"I know the authority and power of a just king surrounded by a faithful people, at all times attached to the principles of monarchy; these have occasioned the glory and splendour of France: I ought, and I ever shall support them. But, whatever may be expected from the most tender solicitude for the public good, whatever can be asked

from a sovereign, the sincerest friend of his people, you may, you ought to hope from me.

"May a happy union reign in this Assembly! and may this epoch become ever memorable by the felicity and prosperity of the country! It is the wish of my heart; it is the most ardent desire of my prayers; it is, in short, the price which I expect for the sincerity of my intentions and my love for my people."

Such was the patriotic language, and such were the pure and magnanimous sentiments of a legitimate king born with unlimited power, whom Frenchmen have barbarously murdered to place his crown on the guilty head of a foreign usurper and tyrant, the assassin and poisoner of their countrymen! The atrocity and infamy of these two acts are without parallel in history.

When His Majesty had ended a speech, several passages of which were received with a marked applause, the Keeper of the Seals, M. Barentin, arose and paid many just compliments to the monarch who had listened to the public voice in convoking the States-General. He also enlarged on the advantage of a limited government, equally removed from absolute monarchy on the one hand, and anarchy and republicanism on the other. The

Comptroller-General of the Finances, Necker, succeeded M. Barentin, and, in a speech of great length, insisted on the necessity of directing the principal attention of the Assembly to the state of the finances, which he allowed to be deranged; but he at the same time reduced the deficit to £2,300,000, which he affected to consider as a trifle for a great and opulent nation. His harangue, however, gave satisfaction to no party. The two first Orders, with reason, deemed it alike unfavourable to their rank and their privileges; and the Third Estate was astonished that nothing was said of liberty, reform, and a new constitution; and all were surprised that, in respect to the great and important question of deliberation by poll, or by chambers, the speech of Necker was dark and ambiguous.

Although Mirabeau and Necker were irreconcilable enemies, Talleyrand had the art to remain upon intimate terms with them both. He was the confidant of the latter and the friend of the former—if men, plotting the ruin of their country, and of equally vicious propensities, can be called friends. It was according to his ideas and advice that the speech of the Comptroller-General had been worded and composed. As this official discourse was the first blow aimed at the popularity of this purse-proud man, many

believed, at this time, that Talleyrand had previously planned with Mirabeau his disgrace and removal from the head of the Financial department, in hopes of succeeding to his place; and when once a member of the King's council, if he could oblige by his intrigues M. de Montmorin, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, to resign an office the aim and ambition of Mirabeau ever since his nomination as a deputy of the States-General, it might easily induce him to expect that the Court, from dread of his eloquence and immorality, would purchase his talents, or quiet his turbulence by a place or a pension.

Never did any people, either ancient or modern, when at perfect liberty to nominate their representatives, select such a set of profligate men as those who represented the French nation in its several assemblies. Even many of those who were of respectable families, and had some property, could otherwise claim no regard for their religious and moral principles, having professed and published doctrines perverting or undermining the faith in a Divinity, and the allegiance sworn to an hereditary monarch, and having, like Talleyrand, by their vicious lives proved the sincerity of their professions. The most impertinent, and at the same time the most ridiculous pretensions to dignity and wealth, to authority and advancement,

were the *primum mobile* of all their actions and the sole aim of all their machinations. As the King had it not in his power to exalt them all to the rank and grandeur of princes, ministers, governors, generals, admirals, bishops, judges, presidents, &c., &c., they determined to reduce rank, eminence and merit to a level with themselves.

Accordingly, the Third Estate began, on the very day the States-General met, to plan the degradation of the two first Orders—the natural and exclusive supporters of the throne and the altar—by forcing them, contrary to former ancient and invariable customs, to unite and deliberate with them in the same hall; or, which was the same thing, to be governed and dictated to by their vast majority, to remain mere ciphers in their presence, sanctioning, without means of opposing, the most dangerous as well as the most violent determinations. Had they not been aware their cause would be supported by many traitorous accomplices, both among the Clergy and Nobility, whom the Orleans faction had bought over to their interest, the conspirators would not, at so early a stage of their proceedings, have ventured to show so much audacity. But Talleyrand, Sieyes, Grégoire and others among the former, and Orleans, La Fayette, the brothers La Methes, Montesquieu,

with their partisans, among the latter, either betrayed the confidential discussions of their Orders, or publicly opposed the wish and resolution of the majority by joining the seditious Commons. At last, on the 27th of June, the faithful minority of the Clergy and the loyal majority of the Nobles, at the express recommendation of the King, repaired to the hall of the States-General, now called a National Assembly.

When the Kings of France, Henry IV., Louis XIII. and Louis XIV., caused a Duke of Biron, a Prince of Chalais, and a Duke of Montmorency, after being fairly tried and lawfully condemned, to perish on the scaffold for conspiracy and rebellion, they were stigmatised by the factious, discontented and ignorant part of all nations with the appellation of tyrants. Few historians, if any, have dared to declare that these traitors to their respective sovereigns deserved their fate, or that, by permitting justice to take its course, these kings and their ministers most probably prevented a revolution, or at least a civil war in which thousands must have perished.

Had Louis XVI. followed in 1789 the advice of his best well-wishers, most trusty counsellors and most disinterested dutiful subjects, and made a summary example of twenty of the principal rebels of the States-General, which he then might have done, an

unjust posterity would doubtless have called him a tyrant, and the conspirators who suffered would have been held up to admiration as *patriots* and victims to the cause of *liberty*. By this time we are, however, too well convinced that such an act of vigour and justice would not only have preserved his own life and the lives of his Queen, his son, and his sister, but would also have prevented sixteen years of revolutions, twelve years of war and misery and the loss of millions of lives; and that these men, who were then noted as rebels, have by their subsequent conduct proved their guilt, and that no punishment inflicted on them could have been too severe.

According to a pamphlet called *Les Candidats de la Potence*,[1] the following were the persons Louis XVI. was advised, and even pressed, in June, 1789, to deliver over to the hands of the public executioner Samson, as the only means to prevent the ruin of France:

The Duke of Orleans, guillotined by his regicide accomplices in November, 1793.

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1 *Les Candidats de la Potence*, Paris, 1791. In the preface it is said that it was written by a president of Parliament, and given to the Duchess of Polignac, who presented it to the King and Queen, but that both Their Majesties disapproved of it, though it proves and defends the necessity of such a *grand coup d'état* to save monarchy and France.

The Duke of Biron, after having served the assassins of his virtuous King, guillotined by them in December, 1793.

The Duke de la Rochefoucault, in August, 1792, murdered in his carriage by the side of his wife, by his new sovereign, the mob.

The Duke of Liancourt, an unworthy and faithless friend of Louis XVI., now a submissive slave and debased prefect under Bonaparte.

The Duke d'Aiguillon, starved to death as an emigrant in Germany, after betraying his King and his Order in France.

The Bishop of Autun, Talleyrand de Perigord, who, after selling himself to, and betraying, all factions, is now the grand vizier of the sultan of faction, Bonaparte.

Abbé Sieyes, who, after repeatedly swearing allegiance to Louis XVI., joined his assassins to murder him; and after numerous oaths to liberty and equality, is now the slavish senator of a Corsican tyrant, who has annihilated both liberty and equality.

Abbé Grégoire, another apostate priest, who, after voting for the death of Louis XVI., *because kings were monsters in the political world*, is a slave and senator of Bonaparte, the most ferocious and bar-

barous monster either in the political, moral or physical world.

Marquis de la Fayette, by turns serving and betraying his King and the sovereign people, after eight years' imprisonment and proscription, the proclaimer of the rights of man, now the passive slave of a despicable Corsican adventurer.

The Marquis of Montesquieu, who, after deserting his King, was deserted and proscribed by the sovereign people; forced to emigrate, and lived long enough to see a foreigner the tyrant of France.

The Marquis de Sillery, beheaded in 1793 by his accomplices of the regicide National Convention.

Count de Mirabeau, who, after conspiring against the Court, sold himself to the Court, and was poisoned by the Jacobins, *pantheonised* by them in 1790, and *depantheonised* by them in 1793. Marat succeeded him in the Pantheon; and both their ashes were afterwards mixed together in the common sewer of Montmartre at Paris.

Viscount Noailles, deserted his King and benefactor, and, joining the mob, was proscribed in 1792, emigrated to England, and was afterwards made a general by Bonaparte and sent to St. Domingo, He was killed in an engagement with an English cutter.

Viscount Custine, a traitor to his King, and in 1793 dragged to execution by the sovereign people, for whom he had fought and conquered.

Alexander and Charles La Methe, educated at the expense of Louis XVI., whom they betrayed; equally despicable and despised by all parties, Bonaparte took them into favour and made them his pashas, under the name of prefects.

La Tour Maubourg, after betraying his King, outlawed by the sovereign people, until the Corsican tyrant of the sovereign people recalled him from his exile. The general under Louis XVI. is now a colonel under Bonaparte, formerly a sub-lieutenant under Louis XVI.

Bailly, the Mayor of Paris, guillotined in 1793 by his sovereign the Parisian mob.

Barnave, guillotined in 1793 for having sold himself to the Court, after having for years conspired against the Court.

Petion, starved to death in a wood, after being outlawed by the National Convention, which owed its existence to his crimes and perjury.

The Marquis Condorcet, who, outlawed by Robespierre's faction, poisoned himself when discovered in 1793.

Robespierre, who, after inundating France with blood

and filling her with dungeons and scaffolds, perished in 1794, in his turn, by the hands of his accomplices and slaves.

Let any impartial man, after reading through this list, pronounce and declare if it contains a single name of any individual whose execution in 1789 would not have been a benefit to society.[1]

What can be the reason that, in all countries and at different periods, when any civil commotions break out, the same names amongst the discontented and seditious nobles are usually read or heard of? It must be ascribed to historians, who, instead of exposing to detestation their crimes, which no rank or fortune can palliate, represent their conduct as misguided patriotism, and, from a regard to certain families, conceal truth or render it doubtful. Their descendants, therefore, think it an honour, and perhaps a duty, to be foremost among the discontented or disaffected, and to continue the hereditary and direct opposers of the government of their country, however just it may be. The La Rochefoucaults, the Montmorencies, the Birons, the La Fayettes, the Talleyrands and others are found among the rebels against

1 The remarks following each name are not contained in the last-mentioned pamphlet

Louis XVI. as their ancestors ranked among those against former kings. Some of this rebellious posterity have already received from the hands of their sovereign mob a just punishment for the treason committed against their lawful monarch; while their accomplices undergo a still severer chastisement, by being constrained to bow beneath the iron sceptre of a contemptible upstart and barbarous usurper, and in witnessing that rebellion which, to gratify their ambition and cupidity they began in the name of liberty, terminated, as such rebellions generally do, in the most degrading and abject slavery.

The Revolution now began to take a turn which neither its adherents or opposers expected. The enormous crimes committed not only with impunity but with audacity, everywhere alarmed the former and terrified the latter. Talleyrand, however, considered a total subversion and anarchy as the only means to arrange his private affairs, and even as an opportunity to recover a kind of consideration. This made him declare himself early in favour of the popular party, and to never desert the Orleans faction until the Court was under the necessity of buying him over. His name and dignity procured him a certain influence over some members of his Order, and his example seduced a great number of the inferior

clergy. Though possessing talents and a great facility in composition, his excessive immorality made him forget that his continual fluctuation and inconsistency would finally convince everybody that he knew no other laws than those of self-interest, and had no other principles than those that led to make his fortune, or to obtain advancement.

On the 6th and 7th of July, 1789, he proposed in long speeches to declare void the contents of the instructions which the members of the National Assembly had received from their constituents. Some few days afterwards he spoke in favour of comedians, of Jews, and of the public executioners, to all of whom he proposed, by a formal decree, to give the rights of active citizens. On the 20th of August the National Assembly, according to his motion, adopted an article which declared all citizens, *without distinction or exception*, admissible to public employments; so that a hangman might hope to be a chief-justice, and a strolling player an archbishop. Three days afterwards he opposed any mention being made of worship in the declaration of the rights of man, and insisted that it was only in the constitutional code where anything concerning the sacred and holy Roman Catholic religion should be inserted. On the 27th of the same month, and on the 10th of October,

he spoke for a considerable time on the finances of France. He acknowledged the necessity of a new loan, but urged also the spoliation of the estates and lands of the Clergy, which he insisted was both just and expedient.

In the *conciliabula* of the Orleans faction Mirabeau proposed, and the conspirators agreed, that Talleyrand should be fixed upon to bring forward in the National Assembly a motion of confiscation, or to declare the possessions of the Clergy national property. The motive which actuated Mirabeau in this instance was two-fold: by means of one degraded and apostate prelate he intended to humble the whole body of the French Clergy; and by making him the mover of the question, to silence, if not to remove, the scruples of a vast majority of the nation, who he well knew, even in the then perverted state of France, would look upon such an unheard-of pillage as nothing less than a sacrilege.

Accordingly, on the 2nd of November, Talleyrand, with a hypocritical solemnity, ascended the tribune and produced his motion. After ten hours of debate it was carried by a numerous majority; and the National Assembly decreed the confiscation and sale of the property of the French Clergy, notwithstanding their offer to advance, for the arrangement of the

finances of their country, £16,000,000—a sum more than sufficient to restore the balance and establish the credit of the Royal treasury.

Foreign nations regarded these great events with astonishment, but with various degrees of sympathy, proportioned to the nature of their own government and their apprehensions of the ultimate result. In this country the capture of the Bastille,[1] the attempt to establish a free constitution founded on a trial by jury, and the liberty of the Press, could not fail to meet general applause. The cruelties which followed the destruction of that hated fortress, though they made a strong impression, were generously imputed to popular error, and rather deplored than severely censured. But the subsequent plunder and burning of châteaux in the provinces, and the murder and even torture of their owners—the first cause of emigration—could by no arts be so excused as to obtain the sanction of a humane, generous and free people.

The pillage of the privileged classes (according

1 According to the registers of the Bastille, published in 1789 by the French rebels, there had been confined in that prison, so decried, only 300 persons in the course of three centuries. During eighteen months of Robespierre's reign 250,000 persons were shut up in the State prisons; and during the five years of Bonaparte's *mild* reign the Temple alone has contained 9,500 prisoners!

to the proposal of Viscount de Noailles, and indeed of all landed proprietors) by the decree of the 4th of August, and that which followed against the lands and revenues of the Clergy after Talleyrand's motion on the 2nd of November, gave alarm to all men who seriously viewed the nature of property and saw with how much facility the arguments which rendered that robbery popular might be applied by the needy, idle and wicked in any country to every kind of depredation. The abominable occurrences on the 5th and 6th of October, when Louis XVI., his Queen, children and relatives were dragged from their palace at Versailles and carried as prisoners to Paris amidst the mangled bodies and heads of their most faithful servants upon pikes, were viewed here with still greater horror and regret. Those who were content to see the authority of the French monarch abridged, were shocked at the unprincipled ferocity and brutality with which his degradation to the state of a captive was precipitated; nor could all the artifice of palliation, nor all the untruths profusely published by the perpetrators and their accomplices in vindication of these events, alter the well-founded opinion of their moral enormity and political portent. The opinion, at first rashly and benevolently entertained, that oppression had driven

a loyal and long-suffering people to resistance, gradually yielded to a conviction of their insatiable love of blood and plunder; and to a demonstration that their own complaints and grievances did not form the ground of their efforts, but that they were mischievous tools in the hands of a desperate faction; and that their dishonesty and cruelty were the principle engines to be used in reducing the Court and the kingdom to passive subjection, through the double terrors of poverty and assassination.

Talleyrand seemed about this period particularly attentive to the financial affairs of his country, but he declared himself strongly against the plans presented by Necker to the National Assembly, instead of which he recommended State-bills (*billets d'état*). This recommendation, notwithstanding the Assembly's previous and solemn declaration that "the creditors of State were placed under the *protection* of the *honour* and *loyalty* of the French nation," was not listened to, because it could not be expected to meet with success among moneyed men, who, from the reeking ashes of their burnt houses, and from the unpunished pillage of their property, began to know how to appreciate the *protection* as well as the *honour* and *loyalty* both of the French nation and its representa-

tives.[1] Subsequent events have justified their fears; since that period *the great nation* has condescended to make no less than four fraudulent bankruptcies, to the detriment and ruin of millions of duped Frenchmen and deluded foreigners.

Towards the latter part of November, he was appointed by the National Assembly one of its commissioners to examine into the real situation of the Caisse d'Escompte, or discount-bank, established by Necker during the American War, and exclusively favoured by this minister; and in January, 1790, he became a member of the Committee of Imposts. It was he who digested the famous address to the French nation in February, the same year, which the National Assembly then ordered to be published, to remind the people both of what its patriotic labours had already produced for them and the grand achievement it was still preparing. This address is very curious, whether we consider the subsequent conduct of its author, or the short duration of all those eternal institutions and philosophical innovations which were held out as so many in-

1 Some of Talleyrand's accomplices proposed, about that time, to Louis XVI. to appoint the Bishop a minister of the finances. This Prince answered: "Non! Talleyrand n'ira jamais droit!" alluding, no doubt, to his mental perversity, as well as to his bodily infirmity of being lame.

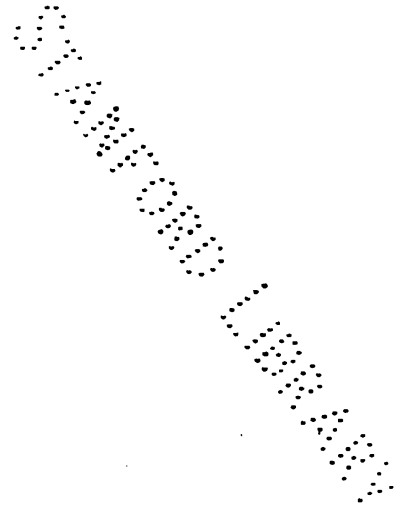
valuable benefits to the nation. During the same month he was for the first time elected President of the National Assembly.

The mobs rising everywhere and on every occasion, and threatening the most frantic violences; the tumultuous proceedings of the National Assembly; the seduction of the soldiery; the undisguised resistance to authority; and the manœuvres, clamours, and calumnies against the King and Queen, may truly be ascribed to the Duke of Orleans, to Mirabeau, Talleyrand, and other subordinate agents or venal mercenaries of the same faction. This is evident, because when, after the barbarous scenes at Versailles on the 5th and 6th of October, La Fayette, by a temporary exertion of firmness, forced the Duke of Orleans to undertake a journey to this country, a state of moderate tranquillity immediately ensued, which seemed to augur better days. But this happy prospect was again clouded by the rashness and folly of Bailly, who, in proposing the solemn foppery of a confederation, revived the means and motives of insurrection, and afforded a leader of the principal party a pretext to revisit France. The day for this confederation was fixed for the 14th of July, as the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille. Talleyrand, in his capacity of a

Champ de Mars Confederation of July 14th, 1790

revolutionary patriarch, was entrusted by the municipality of Paris to officiate pontifically in the splendid ceremony on this occasion in the Champ de Mars. He appeared at the head of more than two hundred apostate priests like himself, dressed in white linen and adorned with the colours of rebellion—the tricoloured ribands. When about to officiate, a storm of wind took place, followed by a deluge of rain. A true atheist, he proceeded, however, in the celebration of the Mass, without any regard to an event which many minds would have considered ominous, and afterwards pronounced a benediction and consecration on the Royal Standard of France, and on the eighty-three banners of the departments which waved around it before the altar of the country. What a pontiff, what a benediction, and what an altar!

But even the day of confederation would have been marked with disastrous events had sufficient time remained after the return of the Duke of Orleans. The want of preparation in his party, the zeal of the deputies of the confederation from the departments, and particularly those of Brittany, presented, however, too strong a barrier about the Throne for a momentary exertion of force to shake it; and the seduction of so large a body could not be effected



Champ de Mars. Confederation of July 14th, 1790

After engraving by Moreau from painting by Schaffer

Champ de Mars Confederation of July 14th, 1790

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without leisure for concerting the means. Besides, during the Duke's absence in England, several of his principal agents had either been bought over by, or were negotiating with, the Court, to desert if not to betray him. Among the latter was Talleyrand, who, as nothing had yet been settled with the Court, could not be much pleased with the sudden arrival of his patron at Paris, from an apprehension of losing, in case of a discovery, the wages already due to his past infamy.

Among other mock ceremonies on the day of confederation, Talleyrand administered to the representatives of the people, and to the federal deputies sent by the departments, a new oath—the fourth within twelve months—of fidelity to the nation, to the King and to the law. In this solemn oath, by which the French bound themselves, the credulous thought they beheld the return of domestic tranquillity; but the more penetrating anticipated only a scene of vast and unqualified perjury. Some apprehended that the Sovereign would attempt to regain a portion of the authority wrested from him; and it was still, with more reason, dreaded that his ungrateful subjects would not be satisfied with the advantages they had acquired. The people heard with distrust the assurances of the Prince; and while he was anxious

only to preserve the little power that had been left him, the multitude were instructed to consider the rights they had asserted as precarious in their duration unless fortified with the ruins of the Throne. The conduct of the people was, however, ungenerous and illiberal to the highest degree. Louis XVI. began his reign with the sincere project of effecting a substantial reform throughout the administration; and history will relate with tears that, amidst various and most terrible scenes of misfortune, he remained faithful to that project to his last hour, and strove to realise the fair vision that had sprung from his excellent heart. Hence his readiness in attending to the bold plans of improvement proposed by Turgot, as well as to the brilliant but delusive promises of Necker. Hence his inducement to convoke the Notables and the States-General, after an improved system of administration, maturely weighed and adopted with ardour, had been drawn up under his inspection. Hence his voluntary renunciation of power, his resignation during his sufferings, and his firmness on the scaffold.

Although Talleyrand was so often occupied with plots and conspiracies, with pronouncing revolutionary speeches, with producing revolutionary reports, with composing revolutionary addresses, and with celebrating

revolutionary festivities, he found time enough to intrigue with the sex, and to communicate with his female friend, the Countess of F——, to whom he wrote regularly when he could not visit her. On the 15th of July, 1790, she received this letter, written on the same day at eight o'clock in the morning:

"If you were as much gratified with your place at the ridiculous *fête* of yesterday as I was with seeing and admiring you where you were seated, you must have supported the storm and the deluge with the same philosophy as your friend. Had not the Duke of Orleans forced me to pass the evening with him, I intended to have seen you last night, and to unbosom my mind concerning the occurrences of this day, which have made so many different and opposite impressions. For my part, I do not know, *entre nous*, whom to pity the most, the Sovereign or the subjects, France or Europe. Should the Prince confide in the affection of the people, he is undone; and should the people not mistrust the character of their Prince, torrents of blood will be required for years to wash off the licentious enthusiasm of a few months, and the innocent must be involved in the same ruin with the guilty. In either case the tranquillity or liberty of Europe will suffer. Far be it

from me to suspect Louis XVI. of being blood-thirsty; but a weak king, surrounded with bad counsellors, easily becomes a cruel one, or, which is the same, from weakness or seduction, permits them to exercise cruelties under the protection of his name and authority. In whatever light, therefore, I regard the consequences of the events of yesterday, I shudder, particularly since my interview with the Duke. No crimes are too atrocious for his ambitious and vindictive heart to conceive. Fortunately for my country, he wants courage and resolution to execute with his hand the horrid conceptions of his head.

"Mirabeau is now as disgusted with him as I am myself. We have frequently great difficulty in concealing the contempt he inspires. Sieyes seems, however, always the same—always cringing, approving or advising. He is jealous of us and mistrusts us, but we are too much upon our guard to give him reason to suspect, before it is ripe, our intention of leaving him and his hero where we found them. He asked me, with a sardonical sneer, in the presence of the whole company, consisting of sixteen, how I could retain my gravity in performing so adroitly the buffoonery in the Champ de Mars; and to how many Christians, among the one hundred thousand

spectators, I thought I administered the national Christian oath. Upon declaring my ignorance, he said, 'I have made a calculation, and do not believe they amount to five hundred, *including the Duke, you, myself, and our party.*' To tell you the truth, I apprehend that he has rather over-rated the number of the *faithful*, and, though a *philosopher*, I deplore the progress of infidelity among the people. I am of the same opinion with Voltaire, that, whether we believe in a God ourselves or not, it would be dangerous to the whole community should the multitude think that they can, with impunity and without fear of punishment in the next world, rob, poison, stab, hang or behead in this. This anti-social doctrine is to be dreaded more now than ever, because the laws are without vigour or support, and the mass of the people consider themselves above them; and, what is most deplorable, *it is the interest of the Assembly to keep up the spirit of this moral and political anarchy.*

"I am well aware that it is not quite gallant to fill with philosophy and politics so much of a letter from a lover to his beloved; but to whom can I confide with safety the thoughts and secrets of my mind, if not to you, who are so much above the pretensions and prejudices of your sex and the discretion of mine? Let this be my apology.

"I hope that it did not escape your penetration to what divinity I yesterday addressed *my prayers and my oath of fidelity* at the altar; and that you *alone* were the *supreme being* I worshipped, and ever shall adore.

"How is it with your *embonpoint?* Is your Charles to have a brother or a sister, or was it only a false alarm? Embrace our dear boy. I shall sup with you, &c., to-morrow.—Burn this epistle."[1]

The contents of this letter is another proof of the corrupt levity, social depravity and sacrilegious profaneness even of the chiefs and leaders of the French rebellion. The horrors already witnessed will, therefore, not surprise, but prepare mankind, as long as a revolutionary government continues to oppress and mislead Frenchmen, to see or hear of still greater enormities.

What a religious and moral blasphemy! The prelate selected to address the Almighty for a whole people, to implore His blessing on their meditated regeneration, begins his letter to his mistress with

1 See *La Correspondence d'Infames Emigrés, &c.*, vol. iv., pp. 11 and 12. In the preface of this work it is said that the publisher printed these letters by the order of the Committee of Public Safety, where all the originals were deposited, and might be seen and compared with the impression.

calling the *fête*, in which he acted as an envoy to heaven, ridiculous; and finishes it by telling the person to whom it was written, and with whom he then lived in open adultery, that she was his *only divinity* to whom all his prayers and oaths were directed, and the only *supreme being* worshipped or ever to be adored by him! How many shocking indignities are offered to Providence in these few lines! and the blasphemer not only lives but prospers. But if—

"D'une conduit pure la gloire est immortelle,
Du crime triomphant la honte est éternelle."

The labours of Talleyrand in the several committees were not without their profit. They were particularly well rewarded when, as a member of the Diplomatic Committee, he proposed the decree agreed to by the National Assembly which changed the family compact between the French and Spanish Bourbons into a national alliance between the French and Spanish nations. England was then arming to defend her just right to Nootka Sound, and demanded satisfaction for the violence committed there on British navigators and traders. Unable, with any prospect of advantage, to combat this country without the assistance of an ally, the Spanish Monarch, by his Ambassador at Paris, distributed 2,000,000 of dollars among the members of the Diplomatic Com-

mittee for the renewal and confirmation of former treaties with France by the National Assembly. Of this sum Talleyrand shared 100,000 dollars, which, notwithstanding the several *patriotic* donations received by him from the Duke of Orleans, were so far from sufficient to satisfy his creditors that, to stop a denunciation of theirs, ready to be printed and distributed, he was under the necessity of borrowing the jewels of the Countess of F——t, which he pawned at the Mont de Piété in Paris, in June, 1790, for £3,900, where they would have been sold, had not the Marquis of Marigni, in June, 1791, lent his sister-in-law money to take them out, as Talleyrand had entirely *forgotten his debt of honour.*

This dear-bought decree of the National Assembly would have been, however, of little benefit to Spain, had not Great Britain, with her usual generosity, instead of enforcing her just and reasonable demands, which she might easily have done, consented to pacific arrangements. It is true that the unfortunate King of France had ordered an auxiliary squadron of forty-five sail of the line to be fitted out at Brest; but the habits of obedience that had long characterised the French nation were universally relaxed, the laws no longer revered, and the duties of subjects to their Sovereign no more regarded. The contagious spirit

of revolt had been communicated to the troops, and in the intemperance of their civic feasts, and the seductive appellation of citizens, the sailors as well as the soldiers had renounced their military fidelity and discipline. Instead of confiding in their commanders, they revolted against them, accusing them of aristocracy, and of conspiracy against the nation; and these absurd and unjust accusations were soon made the foundation of real injuries. Count Albert de Rioms had been appointed to the command of the Brest fleet. But in the arsenals at that port the spirit of insubordination prevailed no less than in other parts of the kingdom; the galley-slaves threatened to fire the store-houses, the sailors derided their officers and the National Assembly, and, in virtue of their strength and superiority in numbers, claimed the right of legislating for themselves. To these excesses the Assembly opposed only feeble and time-serving determinations and regulations, and the Admiral, unable to restore order, being even threatened by the rebellious crews with the then fashionable lamp-post, was obliged to resign his command. He was succeeded by Bougainville, but the pacification that ensued, fortunately for him, reduced his duty to an attempt of restoring subordination. On this occasion the National Assembly, to organise rebellion

in the navy as well as in the army, resolved that the white flag should be no longer used, but that of three colours substituted.

Among other revolutionary distinctions now bestowed, or rather heaped, upon Talleyrand, was his election in August as one of the secretaries of the Jacobin Club, which has since acquired such dreadful celebrity, and of which the Bishop of Autun was one of the founders and leading members. The rage for political discussion had induced some factious members, in the spring of 1789, to form a society, which they called Le Club Bréton. When the Assembly, in the autumn of the same year, removed to Paris, it was augmented by all the opposition parties in that body, and by a great number of political adventurers, speculatists and economists. They hired, as a place of meeting, a building formerly appropriated to the religious order of the Jacobins, and by that name the society was afterwards distinguished. Talleyrand was here in his element, as this club soon became the centre of intrigue and conspiracy. It maintained extensive correspondence with affiliated societies in the kingdom, amounting first to two thousand, but increased during the reign of Robespierre to forty-four thousand. All the provincial and affiliated bodies receiving the

impulse from the parent society, spread insurrection and a love of licentiousness throughout the kingdom. The soldiers were invited to their meetings as the best school for insubordination, and the officers were denounced and punished as aristocrats for interposing their authority to prevent their attendance. By the Jacobins every measure of the Legislature was either prepared or resisted; its way smoothed by petitions and acclamations, or impeded by clamours, menaces and riots. The club also maintained a communication with various foreign societies all over Europe, and by the secret influence of its members in Courts and Cabinets, among ministers, generals and courtiers, and by their public support of most literati, savants, or other men of letters—in their historical works, as well as in their political and literary journals—promised to spread among all classes and in every direction the contagion of its principles, and prepare mankind in general to acquiesce in and even applaud the consequences resulting from them. Every principal town and almost every considerable village in France furnished an association with which the club at Paris held a regular intercourse. It encouraged denunciation and offered support; it listened to complaints and suggested means of redress; it affected to console and promised to chastise; but its language of con-

solation was reserved for those who violated, and its chastisements directed against those who supported, the laws.

Although the Jacobin clubs are no longer fashionable in France, the spirit of Jacobinism there is not only sustained but improved. It continues even to extend its influence and to exert its ravages in most other States. It is now so perfectly identified with the Revolutionary Government, whatever appellation is usurped by its chief—the name of a citizen *sans-culotte*, or the title of an Imperial monarch—that both must rule or perish together. This originates, in a great measure, from the Jacobin propaganda now organised into a *secret external*, as well as an *internal police*, its firmest and invariable support. Both these revolutionary and anti-social institutions acknowledge Talleyrand as their parent. The plan he drew for the former in 1789 was improved by him for the latter in 1799, and the instructions he composed for the emissaries of the Jacobin propaganda sixteen years ago, with the exception of some variations which Bonaparte's conspiracy against all ancient dynasties and lawful governments has made necessary, serve yet for the agents of the secret French police. None but Talleyrand, Mirabeau, and some other principal chiefs, were initiated

in the hidden views of the Jacobin propaganda. Bonaparte, Talleyrand and Fouché are the only persons at present exclusively acquainted with and directing the intrigues, plots and crimes of the agents of the secret French police.

The following curious State paper the author received, with several others, from a loyal friend at Paris, who, though figuring at Bonaparte's diplomatic levees, and from policy partaking of Talleyrand's official dinners, holds in the utmost detestation these guilty men; watches their motions, and penetrates into their plans; has temerity enough often to expose their atrocities, and courage, when occasion offers, to deliver mankind of its scourge:

[1]SECRET POLICE OFFICE.

Secret Instructions for the Agents of our Secret External Police, delivered over to them after their examination and trial have been approved, and after having subscribed the following Oath:

I, —— ——, swear, by everything that is sacred or terrible, to obey, without hesitation, the orders transmitted to me from the Office of the Secret Police,

1 The author is aware that some instances of atrocity displayed in these instructions will appear needless, wanton and extravagant; but he has fairly stated their source. For his own part, he considers them as assimilating perfectly with the general history of revolutionists, and can hardly doubt their authenticity.

even were I commanded to stab my father, strangle my mother, shoot my brother, violate my sister, poison my wife, or drown my children; to set fire to churches or orphans' houses, to blow up palaces or arsenals; to murder persons chained in the dungeons of prisons, or suffering on the sick-bed in hospitals; to spare neither age, nor sex, rank, eminence, nor innocence. Should I disobey the orders, or betray the secrets reposed in me, I consent that this Oath shall be my death warrant.

(Signed) —— ——.

When arrived at your place of destination, wait on our Diplomatic or Commercial Agents, who will have orders to protect you, but only as a common traveller. Try to gain their confidence, and to find out their real political opinions; if sincerely attached to their Sovereign, or tainted with any prejudices favourable to the Bourbons, write down and report all your conversations with them; if they are not removed in consequence, they must in time be entrusted with the secrets of your mission. Then, first, you can, without indiscretion, unbosom yourself, ask their advice, and claim their protection to its full extent.

As we judge proper, and according to the spirit of the Government, or the prejudices of the nation, you are to travel in and visit different countries, either as a military man, an amateur, a savant, or a merchant, &c. Should it be found necessary, you must sometimes descend to be an actor, a dancer, a musician, a quack, a cook, or even a valet.

When in a military capacity, your conversation must often be of battles fought and victories gained, of fatigues, of marches, and of the pleasures of encampments; of duels and deaths; of wounds received, and of foes destroyed. Let your associates or companions dread you as a *spadassin*,[1] or laugh at you as a gasconader, but never give them occasion to despise you as a coward. When an amateur or a savant, curiosities, antiquities or literature must always be the subjects of your discourses, and *seemingly* be your only thoughts. It is better to be ridiculed as a pedant than neglected as a dunce, or suspected as an impostor. When a merchant, trade and manufactures, commercial speculations or financial transactions are to be your only *visible* occupations; and since, in the character of an officer, you are to frequent the military parades or reviews, as an amateur or a savant, museums, learned societies, clubs and academies will be your resort; so as a merchant you are never to miss the exchange, or those coffee-houses resorted to by commercial men or stock-jobbers. A portable library, with select books applicable to the character you represent, will be given you. You must not neglect obtaining from them the information necessary for your station. When in inferior situations, you shall be amply furnished with instructions in what manner to perform your parts.

In countries inimical to, or at war with France, you must pass for an exiled person, a victim of the Revolution, proscribed by the Emperor of the French

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1 Bully.

and pursued by his vengeance. Though there, as everywhere else, well provided with pecuniary resources and credit, complain of poverty, suffer from poverty, and cause yourself even to be imprisoned for debts as poor. Should not the Government after all this open its purse, some *charitable friend* or *relation* in France will send you some succour and relieve your distress, and you are always sure not to rot in a gaol. To obtain that confidence from interest which compassion has refused, you may, with an air of importance, disclose those indifferent secrets given you to be made public. As the authenticity of your disclosure will soon be proved from events, you must say that they are communicated to you by a powerful Royal or Jacobin faction in France, of which you, of course, are one of the principal chiefs. Should you still not succeed, insinuate yourself by some small presents, larger promises, or trifling services, into the confidence of some needy, avaricious emigrant trusted by the Government. He will, no doubt, introduce you into some of the public offices of State; but should you even then not meet with success, apply to our Secret Stationary and National Agent; he will direct you in what manner you will best be enabled to execute your mission. All persons not immediately necessary for your purposes, to whom you have made advances, whom you believe suspect your conduct, or calumniate your principles, or disseminate unfavourable reports concerning you, must immediately be despatched.

As in all countries you are well provided with letters of introduction and credit, try to make such

use of the former as may render it least necessary to resort to the latter. In our secret depôts of the principal cities of Europe and America you may, in making yourself known and in advancing your authority, obtain as much as required in forged bank-notes or bills of exchange, in counterfeit gold or bad silver coins. To avoid suspicion, take care, however, to draw from your banker the sum necessary for your expenses, but remit in good bills, according to address, to the Treasurer of our Secret Police, the amount of what you have taken from our secret depôts.

In all places we have regular Secret Stationary Agents born in the country, and they will always be among the persons to whom you are introduced. They are, and must remain, unknown to our accredited agents. Engage no person in your service who is not recommended by them, except the *valet-de-place* of the inn where you lodge. This description of men are usually spies of the police of their country. By letting them know, with proper discretion, that you are acquainted with it, and that you have ample means to reward their services, you may be enabled to make many useful discoveries, and also to inspect the actions both of our Secret and Public Agents.

When among fashionable people, or with persons of talent, favour or popularity, whose opinions already influence, or may be expected one day to influence, the determinations of the Cabinets, or the spirit of the army, or the public, be very attentive in noting their words, remarks, and even their very looks, in

order that you may know whether they speak what they think, or think what they speak—if they are patriots or enthusiasts, interested schemers or deluded fanatics. Form your judgment, and act accordingly. But the example of France must always be held up as a hope of gaining supremacy for the ambitious, riches for the covetous, justice for the injured, revenge for the vindictive, and impunity for all.

Take care on all occasions to speak of the *regeneration* of France as beneficial to the universe. Be attentive on whom this makes the greatest impression, and answer those who complain of the Revolution as not having realised the prospect and promises of universal liberty, that the universe cannot be free before all present sovereigns have by force been reduced to subjects, and subjects have been elevated to the dignity of sovereigns. This the tenets and victories of Republican *sans-culottes* were unable to effect; it must, therefore, be done by the *senatus consultum*, negotiation, or treaties of Republican Imperialists. Announce that the Emperor of the French will descend to the rank of a simple citizen the instant the subjects of all other countries, in becoming citizens, acknowledge no longer any other sovereignty than that of the people. Be, however, careful with whom you converse in this manner, and avoid either giving offence or inspiring mistrust. Your own penetration will tell you where and to whom you may hold such language without reserve. Should any overtures be made to you in consequence, let the person be ever so high by his rank, or eminent for his genius or capacity, decline

entering into particulars, and remember that you must be known as an individual or isolated traveller only. But report to our Diplomatic Agent the overtures made, the names of the persons making them, and your own opinion of them. As your stay in each place will be but short, you may in company sometimes hazard your remarks rather freely on what is spoken of as abuses of authority in the Government, or what constitutes the complaint of the people. But always do it with caution, and invariably finish by endeavouring to impress them with a sense of the advantages resulting from the French Revolution having destroyed in France all power of abuse on one side, and all causes of complaint on the other.

In whatever country you may happen to be, you are to watch the presses, the booksellers' shops, the post offices, the ante-chambers and closets of the sovereign, the cabinets of ministers, and the offices and studies of their secretaries. To procure information, spare no pains, dread nothing, stoop to anything. The potion or the stiletto, the trinket or the bank-note, you may use by turns and as occasion requires. Do not implicitly confide in those persons you employ; inspect everything and transact as much as possible yourself; do not fail to compare their reports with your own observations; those who intend to impose upon you, or who desire to mislead or betray you, at once despatch.

Do not develop the object of your mission to the Secret Stationary Agent until it is quite ripe for execution; because, when any *grand coup d'état* is to

be struck, he is bound by his oath and duty to procure, at a moment's warning, whatever succour or assistance you may require either in men or money. Should you suspect his weakness, or discover any treachery or hesitation, take care to be provided with the most subtle as well as the most lingering poison, and administer him a dose which will either put an end to his existence in a few seconds, or produce a life of misery and painful death in some months or years, as may best suit your purpose.

If you are entrusted with real and artificial diamonds, on your arrival present those who promise to serve you with the former; but, before your departure, you must exchange them for the latter, or the loss will be yours. By means of the *passe partout*, or pick-lock keys you carry with you, all places must be accessible to you; you may, therefore, easily penetrate into the apartment where the Crown jewels are kept, into the cabinet containing the State papers, into the prince's closet or the minister's portfolio, into council-chambers, into treasuries, into public and private banks, into State prisons, into armouries, store-houses or arsenals.

In *removing* guilty, dangerous or suspected persons, in stopping messengers, in appropriating or exchanging the Crown jewels, in carrying off despatches, in releasing State prisoners, in securing mails, in firing arsenals or store-houses, take care to be seen as little as possible by those in whom you are recommended to confide; but, if once seen by them, never give them time to betray your confidence by surviving their exploits.

By disguise or departure, become invisible as soon as your designs are executed. Our Secret or Accredited Agents will always be previously prepared with the necessary passports into any country, and under whatever name and rank you think safest. Should you, notwithstanding all these precautions, be arrested, fear nothing; poison, steel or gold shall soon *remove* your gaolers and set you at liberty.

Be very attentive to the lists given you of persons friendly or inimical to the Emperor and to France. Neglect no opportunity of converting or *removing* the latter, and of *indirectly* encouraging and watching the former.

Should any new foes start up among statesmen or politicians, among military or literary characters, of ability or firmness, do not give their enmity time to arrive at maturity, but without waiting for further orders—*strike!* and depend upon protection. On the contrary, should any new candidates for the Imperial favour present themselves, inform our Public Agents of it, and report it to us, that they may be encouraged or rewarded as we may think fit.

All persons who, in words, writing or printing, offend the Emperor, deserve death. In buying up the edition of the libel or calumny, do not fail to punish the printer and publisher as well as the author. Let their agony be long, but their annihilation certain.

You must at all times endeavour to be possessed of the good opinion of the fair sex, but more particularly of those who are favourites at Court, or mistresses of princes or ministers, who have pre-

tensions to wit, adroitness at intrigue, and sense or capacity to cabal. Be gallant or liberal, gay or serious, devout or profane, according to the character or caprice of the persons whose friendship or affection you wish to obtain, or whose secret you intend to ensnare, surprise or purchase. Be exceedingly careful in the advances you make; but should you suspect that you have gone too far and entrusted your confidence to an improper person, his immediate death must repair your error and relieve your fears.

Since, by means of the support, recommendation and protection you possess, you may enter into the first or most fashionable circles, and, when occasion requires it, be both splendid in your equipage and retinue and profuse in your expenses and manner of living, you must assume an air of importance—nay, you must be audacious and even impudent when circumstances make it necessary: dare to do everything, and fear nothing. Banish awkwardness or timidity, and let your deportment be always easy and natural, even in challenging the husband after seducing his wife, in insulting the father after debauching his daughter, in relating an absurdity, or in publishing a falsehood. If it is an object of your views to be loved or admired by women, it is also necessary that, if you cannot be liked, you must be feared by men. But those of either sex whom you can neither intimidate, purchase, or seduce—*remove!*

Peruse these instructions so often that they may be indelibly impressed upon your memory, and then you may destroy the key of the ciphers with which

they are written. All papers of consequence, such as the copy of your official correspondence, the list of names, plans of places, and orders, means and instruments for acting, you must, as soon as you arrive anywhere, for fear of accident, leave at our Secret Depôts, from whence you may retake them any hour, day or night.

Any unforeseen or extraordinary occurrences which may appear to you as useful or advantageous during your travels, immediately communicate to us, and wait our further instructions or orders.

Given in our Secret Police Office at Paris.

(*Signed*) NAPOLEON.
(*Countersigned*) TALLEYRAND.
FOUCHÉ.

These instructions of the external secret police agents are said to differ from those of the Jacobin propagators only by the Emperor's having substituted other words in the places formerly occupied by "the rights of man," by "liberty, equality and fraternity," by "the tricoloured cockade," by "the Jacobin cap," or by "the tree of liberty," and other fashionable words of the former revolutionary vocabulary. It is to be wished, for the happiness of civilised society, that a day may soon arrive when we shall no longer hear either of a revolutionary emperor, or of his secret or privileged revolutionary spies.

During the whole of the year 1790, and until September, 1791, Talleyrand continued a perpetual member of the Jacobin committee for propagating the rights of man, and inspected and directed all the secret correspondence carried on in every part of Europe and America.

Several reports concerning the finances were presented by him to the National Assembly during the months of August and September, 1790, in all of which he strongly recommended the issuing of assignats as the only means to relieve the burden of the people and to pay the State creditors. It was not enough to plunder the Clergy of their possessions; it was also necessary for the interest and safety of the chief marauders to admit the greatest part of the nation to a participation of the plunder. Assignats were therefore decreed, and the confiscated estates and lands were to be disposed of and paid for in assignats. If the National Debt, instead of being paid off, was increased since this paper-money was sent into circulation, he and his associates took care to get rid of their creditors and to appropriate to themselves large sums besides for future necessities or excesses. He now intrigued with increasing activity, and instead of being only a member of the Financial Committee of the National Assembly, wished

to become at once the King's Superintendent of Finances, as Necker was likely to resign. But neither his abilities, plots, nor the *carte blanche* he had the audacity to offer the Queen, could remove the well-merited aversion Their Majesties had for his person, or the contempt they felt for his treacherous and depraved conduct.

The seizure and sale of clerical property left the minister of the Christian faith in a state of abject dependence on those who made no secret of their hatred and contempt. Not content with the present plunder, the *philosophers* and *patriots* of the National Assembly sought to render the ministers of religion contemptible, by subjecting them to a new oath as cruelly oppressive as it was contrary to their former engagements and to the duties and rights of the Gallican Church. It commanded them to become perjurers and apostates, traitors to their God, and rebels to their King. Those who refused to subscribe to their dishonour and perdition were driven forth with no resource but a sum of £20 a year, which was never intended to be paid; exposed to the fury of their persecutors as nonconformists, and were, as the French atheists and rebels called it—refractory.

The cruel decrees of the Legislature, mostly instigated by Talleyrand, had been for some time so

replete with tyranny against the Clergy, that the intention of reducing them to misery, or exasperating them to resistance, could not be disguised. After confiscating their established revenues, laws were made declaring all benefices elective, admitting all persons of every sect, even those who were not Christians, to vote in these elections, and totally altering the extent and limits of dioceses. The Clergy respectfully contended that, whatever right the Assembly might claim to their endowments, they could not assume a dominion over the discipline and spiritual government of the Church, and therefore demanded a National Council to decide the points involved in these decrees. This proposition, just as it was, excited the indignation of the Legislature. Pretended conspiracies and insurrections were denounced and declaimed against with fury. On the 26th of November, after the discussion of a long complaint preferred by Talleyrand against the virtuous Bishop of Nantes, the deputy Voidel, a devoted adherent of the Duke of Orleans, made a report from four committees, inveighing in shameless terms against the supposed crimes of the Clergy, proposing a decree by which all members of the Church should be compelled to swear adherence and submission to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy on pain of forfeiting

their livings, and denouncing public and criminal prosecutions against those who, after refusing the oaths, should retain their benefices or exercise their functions. This decree, impiously defended by Talleyrand, was ably combated by the energetic and lofty eloquence of Abbé Maury, by the solid, but temperate reasonings of Abbé de Montesquieu, and by the pathetic simplicity of the Bishop of Clermont. But as their arguments were answered only by profane ribaldry or wanton insult, the majority of the Clergy announced their resolution to take no further share in the discussion; and the decree, with another still more rigorous, proposed by Talleyrand's friend, Mirabeau, passed the Assembly.

The King had already received from the Pope a brief, expressing His Holiness's disapprobation of the Civil Constitution of the Clergy. His Majesty was too sincerely attached to the forms of Church government, as well as the substance of Christianity, to approve of any innovation which the Roman Pontiff declared repugnant to the Ecclesiastical Constitution. The Assembly now pressed him to sanction their decree; but Louis XVI. refused to legalise the measure, till the violent party in the Assembly threatened to renew the outrages of October, 1789. As the brigands in the galleries thundered with

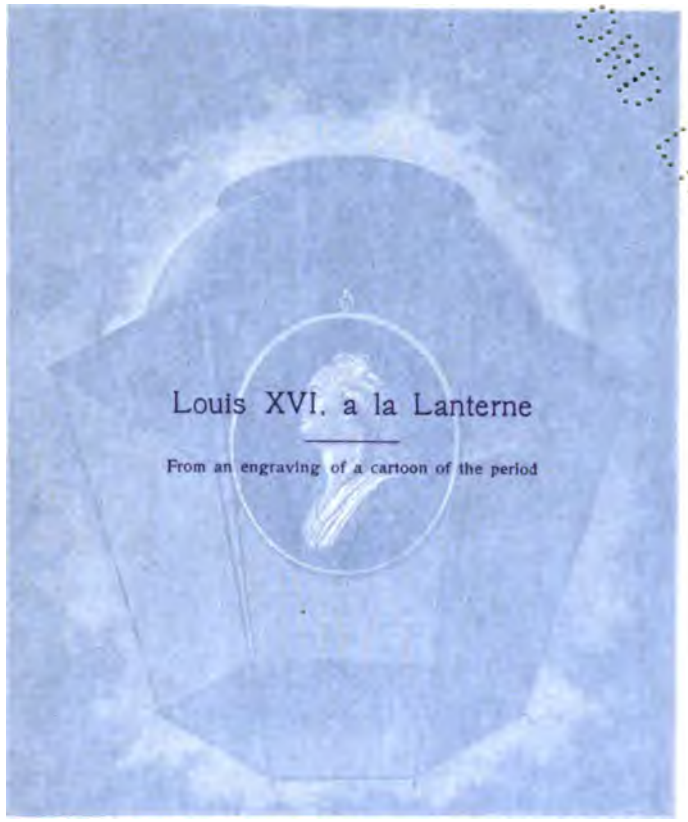
execrations against the bishops for appealing to the Pope, and with complaints of the weakness of Frenchmen who could submit to the veto of a Transalpine Pontiff, and swore destruction to them as well as to the Court, the King, on the 26th of December, reluctantly wrote a long letter to the Assembly, announcing his acceptance of it. The infidels and demagogues now triumphed in their victory over the Church, whose members they had reduced to the alternative of martyrdom or infamy, and were highly gratified when, on the ensuing day, sixty apostate priests or monks took the oaths, headed by the regicide Abbé Grégoire. To enforce the execution of their decree with greater certainty, the Assembly fixed the 4th of January, 1791, as the day on which every ecclesiastical member of their body must peremptorily take the oath or resign his benefice. To inspire them at the same time with apprehension for their personal safety, on the Sunday preceding, according to a plan of Talleyrand, the Orleans faction caused a false copy of the decree to be posted up in Paris, declaring those ecclesiastics not complying with its terms disturbers of the public tranquillity, and, as such, deserving death. The Bishop of Clermont, desirous by a last effort to convince the people of the pure and disinterested

intentions of the Clergy, proposed a modification of the test, but the Assembly refused to admit it.

On the 4th of January, in expectation of the great event, the galleries were early filled, and the hall was surrounded with a clamorous and sanguinary mob. The Clergy attended in their places as willing sacrifices to the purity of their principles. Some time was passed in attempting to modify the requisition of the Assembly, by an explanatory decree proposed by the traitor Grégoire, but it was rejected. At length the President informed the ecclesiastical members that he would proceed to call their names, and that they were bound to answer. The silence with which the intimation was received lasted some minutes, and was only broken by the yells of the people in the galleries, requiring that the non-jurors should immediately be hung to the lamp-post, or *à la lanterne*, the then fashionable cry of French *renovators*. When these clamours were with difficulty appeased, the President began his list with the Bishop of Agen; and the venerable prelate having, after long opposition and much abuse, obtained permission to speak, expressed himself in these words: "I feel no regret for the loss of my preferment; I feel no regret for my fortune; but I should regret the loss of your esteem, which I am determined to

deserve. I beg you, then, to believe that it is extremely painful to me not to be able to take the oath you require." Several other members of the Church returned similar answers; when their enemies, fearful that so many heroic sentences would convert the triumph they had expected into a disgrace, made the President desist from calling the names, and confine himself to a general summons to the ecclesiastics to take the oath or renounce their benefices. After much delay, this definitive appeal produced only one instance of compliance in the person of a curate named Landrin. All the rest, with unparalleled resignation and calmness, heard the decree read which ejected them from their livings for ever, deprived them of bread, and made them Christian outlaws in the midst of a nation of atheists and assassins.

All the bishops, except Talleyrand and two others, with many thousands of parish priests and curates, were thus to be suddenly replaced. A new decree obviated the difficulties thus created, by shortening the term required by the law for qualifying clergymen to hold benefices. An unprincipled rabble—the dregs of infidelity and apostacy—were in this manner put in possession of the remaining wealth and titular honours of the Church; while those who had long



Louis XVI. a la Lanterne

From an engraving of a cartoon of the period

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held these dignities—and by their virtues had gained the affections of their flock—were deprived of every resource to support an existence and were threatened every instant with destruction.

The excessive cruelty of this persecution by pretended philosophers was deeply felt. Whatever opinions might be entertained of the Romish doctrines, no reasonable man could withhold his detestation of the iniquity of compelling persons inducted into an office to renounce it, with all its emoluments, unless they would take an oath directly repugnant to every principle which it was essential they should possess in order to qualify them for that office. Perhaps the honour, morality and vigour displayed by the Clergy on this occasion exceeded the expectations of their adversaries. Less energy would have exposed the whole body to contempt; but thus to renounce elevation and submit to poverty in a host, raised them to the rank of martyrs. The purity of their principles could no longer be questioned, and the victorious party foamed with rage at the eloquent expressions of one of the deputies among the Nobility respecting the ejected bishops: "If they are driven from their episcopal palaces," he said, "they will retire to the huts of the religious, who have been fed by their bounty. If deprived of

their golden crosses, they will find wooden ones; and it was a cross of wood that saved the world. Let their persecutors pursue their grey hairs even to this humble retreat—martyrdom will be submitted to with the same resignation as poverty." But, independent of its inhumanity to individuals, this infamous and impolitic decree may be regarded as one of the principal causes of all those civil disturbances in different parts of France which gave rise to the Vendean War, and to the numerous atrocities perpetrated by Republicans in that loyal and religious country; and though Bonaparte has compelled the present weak Pope to interpose his authority, the schism between the non-juring and revolutionary Clergy continues to excite commotions and to torment the conscience of those who yet retain any sense of religion.

Talleyrand, to palliate his apostacy, perjury and intoleration, had, under date of the 29th December, 1790, published an address to the clergy of France; and in relating the motives which had engaged him to subscribe the constitutional oath, he invited all ecclesiastics to follow his example. This address, though written with ability, instead of making proselytes, only excited the surprise and indignation even of his partisans. For a nobleman by birth and a

prelate by dignity not only to be unabashed at his treachery and degradation, but to glory in his infamy, and declare himself the hired tool of the vilest and most abandoned of men, evinces such perversion of principles or depravity of mind, that the loyal public did not know whom to abhor the most, the rebel or the apostate. From that instant he was forbidden the presence of his relatives, and everybody who loved virtue or detested vice shut their doors against him.

Such were his public transactions, and such their effect, which were both known and felt at the time. But, for contemporaries as well as for posterity, it is peculiarly interesting to dive into the private views of persons claiming celebrity to discover those secret springs which are generally unknown to anybody but themselves, and to be enabled to judge of the candidate for popularity by the professions of the individual and the confidence of the friend. Under date of the 24th of November, 1790, Talleyrand wrote to the Countess of F——t:

"I am tired of all this bustle and broil about the oath exacted by the Assembly. If my *compères* were not fools they would follow my example—think more of their appetites and comforts in France, and less of their consciences and duties to Rome. After all the oaths taken and broken by us, after so often swearing

fidelity to a constitution, to a nation, to a law, and to a king, existing only by names, this last is a mere mummery, the invention of the Duke of Orleans to involve the French prelates with Louis XVI. Thanks to their imbecility or fanaticism, he is disappointed; he has made no new acquisition, but caused his poor friends more trouble than he has, or I fear ever will have, it in his power to recompense. I was closeted last night six hours with him, Mirabeau, Sieyes and Voidel; and on my return home I found a note from L. P.,[1] and early this morning went to meet him. The Court is too late with its offers to stop or change this affair, which, to its other curses, adds the torment of forcing me to remain so long absent from you. I have invited your husband to dine with me to-morrow; do not fail to be of the party, otherwise I do not know when I shall see you, being engaged at the committees to-morrow and the two following nights. I embrace you and our Charles affectionately."

On the 5th of January he wrote again to the same lady:

"Business of great importance to my creditors, as well as to myself, deprives me of the pleasure of

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1 No doubt La Porte, the intendant of the King's Civil List.

passing Twelfth-night with you, as I promised and intended. Poor kings! their *fêtes* as well as their reign will soon, I fear, be at an end. Even Mirabeau apprehends that our strides towards a republic are too hasty and too violent; and that before we can establish a commonwealth,[1] fanatics will light their torches, and anarchists shake their halters, and that we all shall have narrow escapes between religious faggots and political lamp-posts. I must, therefore, arrange my affairs in such a manner as that, in case of a shipwreck, I may not be left destitute on the coast where fate may throw me. I am in hopes of receiving to-morrow a considerable sum due to me from the Duke, which, with what assignats I possess already, will take me, if needful, from France, and provide for us abroad. How did you like the *farce* of yesterday? The galleries were too crowded to permit me to speak to you; but did not the hypocrites exhibit a *masterly* performance? It could not escape your observation that their speeches were as studied as their resignation was affected. But the impression they made prevented me from ascending the tribune and tearing off their masks. They were well aware that there was no danger of exchanging

1 What a commonwealth, of twenty-four millions of corrupt people!

their episcopal mitres for crowns of martyrdom, otherwise the cowards would not have shown themselves so valiant. I am enraged to think how easily they could make dupes. I dare say they have received good lessons from the superstitious Capets,[1] males and females, as well as from certain cardinals, who cannot call patriotism one of their *cardinal* virtues. I wish with all my heart both the instructors and the disciples were at Rome, or anywhere else but in France, where their mockery of apostles and martyrs can do no more good to them than their unfashionable orthodoxy or ridiculous Christianity to the patriots, many of whom are yet ignorant enough to believe in the religion of their forefathers. Though this *ridiculous* business has given me a great deal of labour, it has upon the whole been more *profitable* than I expected. It has cleared my debts, and, *entre nous*, put me in a fair way to be able to purchase the tiara of France, of Rome, or at least of the Revolution. On Monday I will sup with you. How is it with Charles's deafness? I embrace you both cordially and affectionately.—*Burn this letter!* Adieu!"

From these letters it is evident that, without any religion himself, Talleyrand doubted the sincerity of faith in others; and, as his motives for acting were

1 The Bourbons.

interested and wicked, he could not believe in the disinterestedness and purity of those whom no temporal consideration could allure and no revolutionary threats intimidate. He and most of his accomplices always drew mankind according to their own model; and those who deny the existence of virtue, never resist the temptation of becoming associates in guilt. The levity and indifference with which he speaks of the misery prepared for his country by the deeds and plots in which he had such a considerable share, is shocking and disgusting. Amidst all these cruel reflections, he thinks of no one but himself—except once, by way of compliment, of his mistress, and the offspring of their adulterous intercourse. If they, together with himself, were safe anywhere, he would contemplate with *sang-froid*, and perhaps with satisfaction, the revolutionary conflagration he had lighted consuming the globe, provided it spared that snug corner where our philosopher might be planning new devastations or enjoying the fruits of those he had made already. By these letters we learn, besides, that the Orleans faction intended by this oath to raise fresh recruits for their chief, to support him in his conspiracy to usurp the throne of his King and relative, and that among the Clergy, as well as

among the Nobility and the people, they hoped that everyone who, from depravity or weakness, had debased or dishonoured himself, who had crimes to repent and punishment to apprehend, would adhere to the Duke of Orleans as their preserver and protector. Bonaparte has since, with more success, adopted the same plan, and his usurpation and empire has no other foundation; but it is also to be remembered that Talleyrand is his principal counsellor and faithful minister.

During the late debates concerning the Clergy, the conduct of Mirabeau had been a problem, which scarcely any of his old adherents, and few of the King's friends, were able to solve. It is, however, unquestionable that Talleyrand shared his secrets and the wages he obtained for deserting his party. This is certainly the money mentioned in the letter to the Countess of F——t, of the 5th of January, 1791, and he, therefore, was insincere even in his seeming trust and pretended sincerity with his bosom friend. The finances of the Duke of Orleans were at that time so totally deranged, and his credit so irretrievably lost, that he lived merely upon expedients, and could not, therefore, dispose of any sum of consequence. In fact, the former negotiation between the popular demagogue Mirabeau and the Court

had been successfully renewed, and in consideration of £25,000 cash paid him, and a monthly stipend of £2,080, he became a warm advocate in the cause of monarchy, and gained the entire confidence of the King and his most intimate advisers. According to the pamphlet *La Faction d'Orléans Démasquée*, "Talleyrand received, in one single payment, in January, 1791, from La Porte, the intendant of the King's Civil List, the sum of £50,000 in assignats. But both these traitors had a difficult task to perform in acting with characters equally immoral with themselves, and, of course, as suspicious of being betrayed as they were ready to betray. It had been settled that Mirabeau should first gradually undermine the ground seized by his fellow conspirators, and that his associate should not openly join him before the fire was ready to be set to the mine and their annihilation inevitable." But as he was sensible that, in the degraded and enfeebled state to which he had reduced the Royal authority, no sudden effort of force would be attended with the desired consequences, he still proposed to forward his new measures by means of his popularity, to awe the most frantic of the revolutionists by threatening to disclose their crimes, to combine others in his cause by a judicious mixture of promises and arguments, to secure the fidelity of

the army to the Sovereign, or engage the people to petition for the dissolution of the present and convocation of a new Assembly, on the well-founded allegation that the existing Legislature had exceeded the authorities with which it was originally invested, and, consequently, that its abolitions, resumptions and regulations were not valid. It was also a part of this project that the King should leave Paris, where he was in real captivity, and, putting himself at the head of his forces, commanded by the Marquis de Bouillé, fix his abode at Montmedy, proclaiming himself the protector of his people and the defender of their rights and liberties. The plan was wise, dignified and moderate; it proposed no violence against the Assembly, no proscription of individuals, no punishment even of perjurors. It could not with propriety be called a counter-revolution, but a tranquil mode of retracting those errors into which precipitate zeal, scandalous venality, or corrupt ambition, had plunged the Assembly. Faithful to his new engagements, Mirabeau saw with regret the late attacks on the Clergy; but neither he nor Talleyrand could openly oppose them, as the difference between such conduct and that which they had always before observed would have been too conspicuous. At first he promised to absent himself

from the Assembly for a month; but his sagacity soon discovered the folly of secession, and he contented himself, when the decrees had passed, with proposing an address to the nation, which would, by its excessive violence, have roused every true friend of the Catholic religion and compelled them to rally round the altar. Talleyrand approved of this address; the other demagogues, however, foresaw this effect, and, though they concurred in the atrocious sentiment it contained, referred it back to a committee.

In the discussion on the laws against emigration, Mirabeau, invited to the tribune by the applause of all parties, took a leading part; but Talleyrand remained silent. The former began his speech by observing that, within an hour before, he had received ten notes, one half claiming the performance of those principles which he had long openly supported on the subject of emigration; the other requiring him to agree to what was called the *necessity of circumstances*, or, what was the same thing, to procure the beggarly rebels of the Assembly an opportunity to enrich themselves with the plunder of emigrated men of property. He then read a page and a half of a letter which he had written six years before to Frederic William, King

of Prussia, on the day of his accession to the throne, in which he exhorted that monarch to desist from enforcing laws against emigration, as derogatory to liberty, incompatible with justice, and fit only for those Powers who wished to convert their States into prisons. After dwelling at considerable length on these just and liberal sentiments, and proving their policy by various arguments and examples, he moved, "that the Assembly, having heard the reports of their committees, and considering a law against emigrants incompatible with the principles of the Constitution, had refused to hear the plan of the law read, and passed to the order of the day." This excited great murmurs; but Mirabeau, regardless of their clamours, again ascended the tribune. Those who durst not individually attack his arguments, now endeavoured to drown his voice by repeated marks of discontent; but suddenly turning towards them with a look of ineffable superiority and marked contempt, "Silence," he exclaimed, "silence those thirty voices!" The factious leaders, apprehensive that he would disclose the plots, as well as the number of their association, shrank into immediate silence, and permitted him to recommend that, if the adjournment were adopted, a decree should issue for prevention of riots till its expiration. He had, however, the mortifica-

tion to see a contrary proposition of Vernier's adopted; and thus a basis was laid for those acts of fraud, confiscation and tyranny which have disgraced the French annals, and reduced so many noble and worthy families to poverty abroad, or to undergo imprisonments and suffer judicial murders at home, while upstarts, loaded with crimes and enriched by plunder, have been enabled with impunity to revel in their possessions, insult their misfortunes, and proscribe and butcher their persons.

While occupied in the arrangements for carrying into effect his grand plan for changing the Government, Mirabeau was seized with a sudden illness, and, after enduring for two days the most excruciating tortures, expired in the arms of Talleyrand, on the 2nd of April, 1791, exclaiming, "J'emporte la monarchie avec moi: des factieux en partageront les débris. Tu mon ami as trop d'esprit pour ne pas avoir ta part." When his illness was announced the whole capital was in alarm, his door was crowded with enquiries, and messengers from the King himself augmented the number. His death was ascribed in the *procès-verbal*, published by the surgeons who opened him, to the stoppage of an issue; his heart, they said, was dried up and his intestines mortified. That he was poisoned was the then received opinion, and subsequent occurrences,

instead of changing, have confirmed it; and it is not doubted that his most intimate accomplices (a traitor has no friends) administered the draught which put an end to his life. Talleyrand and his friend, or tool, the physician Cabarris, who attended Mirabeau during his last hours, might easily yet give such information as would remove all doubts, even with modern *patriots*, of the real causes of the premature death of this their hero. But it is feared that their secrets will be buried in the same tomb, where, in 1795, were deposited, with his corpse, those of the poisoner of Louis XVII. An account has, however, been published of the manner in which Mirabeau was despatched, and of the party of debauchery at which he swallowed the deadly dose. "He, with Talleyrand and four other libertines—each with a female companion — supped at the Restaurateur Roberts, in the Palais Royal. In the midst of their intemperance, Madame le J——, the wife of a bookseller of Paris, and the mistress of Mirabeau, made her appearance, and, upbraiding him with all the marks of the most violent jealousy for his infidelity, insisted upon his leaving the company with her. After many reciprocal reproaches, she at last affected to be appeased by the intercession of Talleyrand, and, taking her place among them, her lover's

temporary *bonne amie* was sent away. Excesses of every kind were then renewed and continued until four o'clock in the morning, when Madame le J—— ordered coffee to revive their spirits. This she had no sooner given Mirabeau than he complained of terrible spasms in his chest. In hopes of finding some alleviation, he went into a warm bath, where he took several dishes of milk with cocoa. This liquor, affording a temporary relief to his complaint, is said to have prolonged his sufferings, as the poison drank with the dish of coffee would otherwise, from its subtlety, have brought on immediate death. During his short illness, he refused to see Madame le J——, whom he accused of having hastened his end by her *excessive* love. After his death, this woman lived with Talleyrand for some time, but was afterwards resigned by him to Petion. This gave rise to the report of Talleyrand having betrayed to the Republican faction Mirabeau's desertion, and represented what might be the probable consequences to persons guilty as they were. This woman was suspected, therefore, of having, *with the privity, and even at the instigation of Talleyrand*, been selected by Petion, Condorcet, Brissot, Cabarris, and others, to remove the most dangerous barrier against a general revolution and a universal republic."

If Talleyrand's letter to the Countess of F——t, on this occasion, be interesting for the anecdotes it contains, it is also disgusting for the impious sentiments it proclaims. A mixture of profaneness and sophistry, it paints in the same hideous colours the friend, the patriot and the bishop, in the unfeeling individual, in the treacherous associate, and in the blaspheming infidel:

" April 2nd, at night.

" I was in bed when your servant brought your letter this afternoon, not from illness but from fatigue, having passed these last nights with my dying friend who breathed his last in my arms this morning at half-past eight o'clock. Dignified during his life, in death he was sublime. He preserved his senses and firmness to his last moment. Five minutes before his final annihilation, he wrote: 'It is not so difficult to die as we frequently find it to sleep.' Notwithstanding his excruciating tortures, he often joked during the night. Once he said to me, '*A propos*, my friend, you are a bishop, and you have forgotten to sign an absolution for my forty-two years' sins, when it might perhaps be a pass or a key to enter the Elysian Fields.' To my assurance that it would neither satisfy Charon, nor quiet Cerberus, he retorted, 'Then I suppose I shall be obliged to fight my way

to Paradise as I did to the National Assembly, by borrowing, cheating, and, above all, by declaiming. If the saints do not convert me, I shall try to pervert them, as I have done with our *pure* patriots. But to cease joking, I have been employed for some time in composing a speech concerning successions. The National Assembly is now occupied in discussing laws relative to wills. It may be thought curious enough that a man who has just made his own will should offer, as his last homage, the opinion he has prepared on this subject. I bequeath to your friendship the trouble of reading it in the tribune of the Assembly.' This I intend to do the day after to-morrow, after having previously arranged my own ideas for pronouncing, at the same time, an apotheosis on my departed friend. About seven o'clock he spoke rather peevishly to Cabarris: 'A physician,' said he, 'who attends a friend as a friend, ought to shorten his torments with a good dose of opium.' He then took my hand, and, looking at me very earnestly, exclaimed: 'My friend, I am hastening fast to the place were I was before I was born, and monarchy departs with me. Factious persons will tear each other to pieces for its ruins; you have two much genius not to get your share.' These were the last words he was able to utter, though he afterwards made

repeated attempts to speak. During his illness he frequently hinted that he knew that he was poisoned, and mentioned even the hand that had administered the draught. I took care, however, to disperse these gloomy ideas, in which I was well supported by Cabarris, who *proved* to his satisfaction that intemperance *alone* had shortened his days. He remarked, however, upon this that, though he died in an enviable manner, surrounded with all the brilliancy of popularity, he wished the destiny that made him intemperate had permitted him to expire on the field of battle, or in the midst of those pleasures which had constituted his chief happiness.

"You reproach me kindly for not taking sufficient care of my own health; but could I, from any consideration of *my own safety*, leave a dying friend, who, though a great character, certainly, *entre nous*, was a still greater rascal, and, from indiscretion or wickedness, or even from malice at my surviving him, might have discovered secrets which ought, for our mutual honour, to have perished with him. Merely for the humour of ridiculing religion in exposing a bishop, he was capable of playing me such a trick. Besides, my attention to him, and his confidence in me, will give me a good share in his *immortality*. Yesterday he enquired after you, and asked me if

you were not yet cured of the prejudices you had imbibed in the convent; if you still believed in a heaven, or feared a hell. 'If —— embrace her for me, and tell her,' said he:

'Mettons nous au-dessus de toute erreur commune,
On meurt, et sans ressource, et sans réserve aucune.
S'il est après ma mort quelque reste de moi,
Ce reste un peu plus tard suivra la même loi,
Fera place à son tour à des nouvelles choses,
Et se replongera dans le sein de ses causes!'

Therefore—

Que sur la Volupté tout votre espoir se fonde,
N'écoutez desormais que vos vrais sentiments:
Songez qu'il étoit des amans
Avant qu'il fut des Chrétiens dans la monde.

I hope my friend will listen to the advice of a man whose genius and talents she has so often and so justly admired.

"Tormented as he was, his presence of mind never forsook him. The curate of St. Roch wanted yesterday morning to act with him as another fanatic did with Voltaire. He admitted, but deprived him of courage to speak, by repeating these lines, and he went away as he came:

'Fanatiques irrités, armez votre vengeance,
Le trépas me défend contre votre insolence.
Grand Dieu! votre courroux devient même impuissant,
Et votre foudre en vain frappe mon monument:
La mort met à vos coups un éternel obstacle!'

"His political creed was of the same complexion with his religious, and he no more believed in disinterested patriotism than in the immortality of the soul. From what we have seen of some of our fashionable patriots, I am not at all surprised at his political infidelity. But if he would not allow probity to one sex, he likewise denied that yours possessed what the vulgar call virtue. He confessed, however, that your vices were so agreeable that they made your want of virtue amiable, instead of being a reproach to you. In such a *truly philosophical* manner did he pass his last hours. A time will come when the expressions and opinions of this expiring hero will be as religiously collected and preserved as those of a Socrates or a Seneca. They will serve for *moral* texts in the discourses of philosophers, and form subjects for the chisel of the statuary, as well as for the pencil of the painter."

Such were the private opinions, and such was the avowed conduct, of the principal French *regenerators*. No wonder, therefore, if the world has to deplore so many barbarities since perpetrated by their accomplices, instruments or disciples. These were the men held out everywhere as the models of patriotism, on whom German *illuminati* wrote panegyrics, and to

whom English *reformers* sent addresses; whose cause was defended in our senate, and even praised in our pulpits. To strip these monstrous impostors of their borrowed but imposing garb, and to expose their native deformity to the general eye and universal abhorrence, is, therefore, to render a service to society. This will be most effectually accomplished by publishing their original and confidential sentiments, fortunately preserved by the malicious vengeance of ever-relentless factions.

Mirabeau and Talleyrand were both noblemen by birth, both marked by Nature to inspire mistrust, both vicious in their youth, corrupt and profligate in maturity, and in every social relation objects of horror. Both atheists and apostates, they forfeited their allegiance to their King to league with rebels, and betrayed and deserted rebellion to unite again under the standard of royalty. Mirabeau died before he was tempted, or had an opportunity, to commit new treasons. Talleyrand has since served and betrayed by turns his King and every succeeding faction. Ambition, avarice and lust were the ruling passions of both; to gratify which, no infamy deterred them, no crime was left untried, and no excess unpractised. Difficulties could not divert, nor opposition appal Mirabeau; but under them

Talleyrand shrank into silence; he, however, as often attained his object by undermining, as the former conquered by bold and open assaults. With a genius that astonished, with abilities that enraptured, with an enthusiasm that moved, animated and electrified the hearts of all who heard or beheld him, when Mirabeau spoke, his audience forgot the scandalous immorality of his life, the hideous features of his face and the grotesque gesticulations of his person. By his activity in the committees and among the Jacobins, and by the facility with which he composed popular addresses or decrees, Talleyrand was nearly as dangerous to loyalty and religion when in his closet as Mirabeau when in the tribune—because all France could not hear the latter, whereas not only France, but all Europe, could read the writings of the former. The death of Mirabeau was regarded in France as a public calamity; the life of Talleyrand will, by remotest posterity, be bewailed as one of those scourges with which, instead of pestilence or earthquakes, Providence in its wrath sometimes punishes generations. From the lives of Talleyrand and his present guilty master, Bonaparte, mankind has undergone more torments in some few years than ages had previously endured from devastations occasioned by the convulsions of Nature, from disease

and pestilence, or from the whole catalogue of miseries by which the human race are afflicted.

The decrees for altering the establishment of the Clergy had already been put in force. The election of new bishops and pastors, in lieu of those who refused to take the oaths, was carried on with great activity throughout the kingdom; and the Pope's decision against the new Constitution of the Clergy was publicly known. Considerable difficulties arose in obtaining consecration from a constitutional prelate for those who had been newly raised to episcopal sees. Even the apostate Bishops of Sens and Orleans resolutely refused the office; but the Bishop of Autun (Talleyrand), whose conduct had been always a scandalous, and often an inexplicable enigma, was not so honest, delicate, or scrupulous. Having obtained bribes from the Court and from the Duke of Orleans, and embezzled assignats in the Committee of Finance, he modestly resigned his see, after taking the apostate oath, not willing, as he said, "to have his actions ascribed to *interested* motives."

The bishopric of Paris was not at first declared vacant, because the incumbent, the old and respectable M. de Juigné, was out of France; but his resolution to be faithful to his God, as well as to

Feast of the Goddess of Reason at Notre Dame

his King, being made known, his see was conferred on a priest of the name of Gobel, notorious for his venality, profligacy and ingratitude; but who, in the present state of the public mind, was thought worthy of election to three several prelacies, those of the Upper Rhine, the Upper Marne and the Metropolis. As he could not retain all, he chose the last, and was installed with great pomp, receiving *canonical institution* at the same time from Bishop Talleyrand and from the Jacobins of the Paris municipality. This revolutionary prelate is the person who, on the 7th of November, 1793, at the age of seventy, had the baseness to declare at the bar of the regicide National Convention that, "he had during sixty years of his life been a hypocrite and an impostor in professing the Christian religion, which he knew had no other basis than falsehood and error." He lent his cathedral of Notre Dame for the celebration of a feast to the Goddess of Reason, represented by a common prostitute, and was one of the first to kneel before this Republican divinity. It is impossible to decide who was the viler and more wicked of the two, the consecrator Talleyrand or the consecrated Gobel. But, perhaps, no building erected to the adoration of Our Saviour has been more sacrilegiously polluted than the French Metropolitan Church of Notre Dame.

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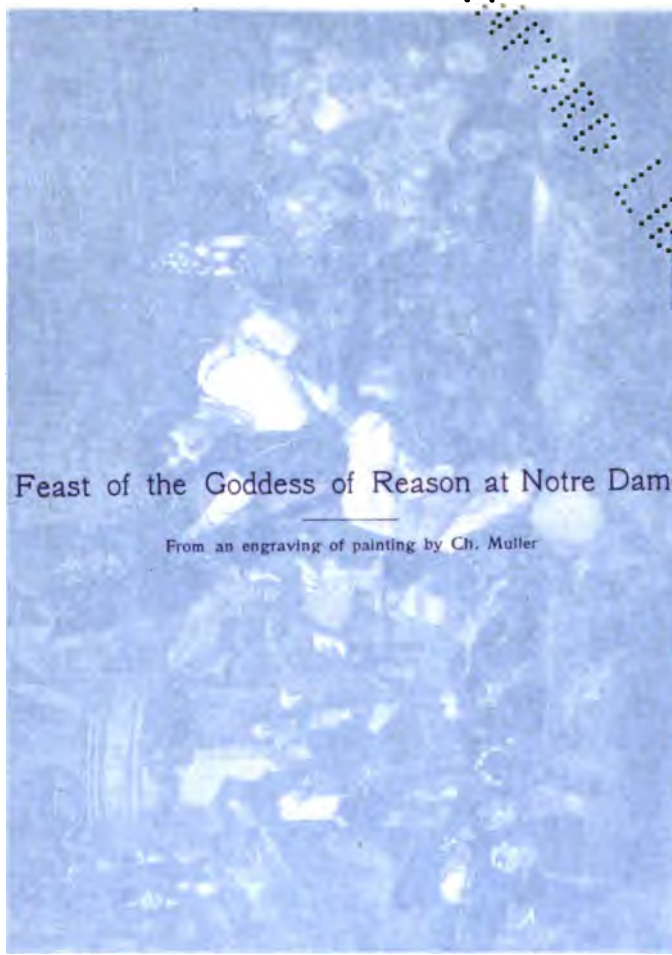

Feast of the Goddess of Reason at Notre Dame

From an engraving of painting by Ch. Muller

Feast of the Goddess of Reason at Notre Dame

ARSIP NEGARA RI

There, besides Talleyrand's consecration, Gobel's installation, the worship of the Goddess of Reason, and the blasphemy of theophilanthropists, the apostate to Christ as well as to Mahomet, the murderer and poisoner, Napoleon Bonaparte, has lately been crowned Emperor of the French!

Notwithstanding Talleyrand's plots and acts, the triumph of the anti-religious party was not yet complete. They saw, with regret and indignation, that the constitutional, or, as they were more justly called, the interceding Clergy, were viewed with general contempt, while the ejected and non-juring priests were everywhere treated with the utmost regard; and the homage and affection of the pious were manifestly increased. The Jacobin municipality of Paris forbade the reading of prayers in any parish church, except by the apostate priests; and enjoined the convents and hospitals not to permit the public to attend Divine service in their chapels. The French *reforming philosophers*, to evince their religious as well as political *toleration*, instigated mobs, carrying rods, to force open the doors of all these places of worship and to scourge with the utmost cruelty all the nuns and women whom they found engaged in acts of devotion. Talleyrand was then a member of the department; but neither this body, nor the municipality, took any effectual measures

for restraining these indecent outrages; on the contrary, they encouraged and protected the mobs, whose insolent brutality soon became so grievous a persecution as to cost the health of many, and even the lives of some of the most virtuous and religious among the sex.

On the 13th of April, 1791, the Pope published a monitory against the Civil Constitution of the French Clergy, in which His Holiness complained loudly against the Bishop of Autun as "an impious wretch, who had imposed his sacrilegious hands on intruding clergymen," and suspended him from all his episcopal functions, declaring him excommunicated unless he recanted his errors within forty days. In return, Talleyrand encouraged the rabble, now called by the Parisians "La Secte des Talleyrandistes," to burn the Sovereign Pontiff in effigy; and on the 10th of June the Legislature passed a decree, declaring all briefs, bulls and rescripts of the Court of Rome void in France, unless sanctioned and formally adopted by the National Assembly. The usual modes of persecution and calumny were adopted to change the public opinion on these points, or at least to suppress the indications of it. While the remaining property of the Church was rapidly falling into the grasp of greedy and corrupt legislators, and

the popular mind was debauched by abject and absurd idolatry to the principal opponents of the Christian revelation, reports were assiduously circulated of riots and insurrections formed by the non-juring Clergy and their partisans in the departments, and they were falsely accused of inspiring sentiments equally barbarous and unchristian. Pursuant to a motion of Talleyrand, the *superfluous* plate of the churches (and all plate for Divine service he regarded not only as superfluous but unnecessary) was ordered to be coined into money. A most ridiculous decree, since the chief value consisted in the workmanship; and the quantity of fillagreed and embossed silver which in a shrine was considered inestimable, would, on emerging from the crucible, produce only a few crowns—sums hardly sufficient to pay for the festivity of *pantheonising* (as the revolutionary phrase was) Mirabeau, Rousseau and Voltaire, which was decreed by the Assembly, and, in the course of the year, performed with great pomp. On these occasions Talleyrand had assumed the office of revolutionary grand master of the ceremonies, in exchange for the worn-out dignity of a revolutionary high-priest.

Although Louis XVI. had been prevailed on to sanction the decree respecting the Clergy, he yielded

only to the impulse of force; and his conscience was daily racked with increasing torture by reflections on the injury he had done to the religion of his fathers and the cruel violence he saw daily committed under pretence of giving effect to that decree. The well-concerted project of Mirabeau for ameliorating the condition of the King and preserving the State from subversion died with him, as no individual could be found capable of acting the extensive and important part assigned to that great revolutionist. The project of repairing to Montmedy was retained till it was encumbered with another suggested by the Minister of the Foreign Department, M. de Montmorin, by which the great Continental Powers were to form a pretended coalition, to marshal inefficient armies and wage an imaginary war, while the King's friends, by their exertions in all parts of the kingdom, were to sway the public spirit to an anxious desire of peace, military subordination, the establishment of the ancient monarchical constitution, freed from its abuses, and the return of the emigrants. This plan, which required the combination of an infinity of subordinate circumstances, the execution of which would have been deranged by failure, indiscretion or selfishness in any of the numerous domestic or foreign agents, who must

necessarily be trusted and employed, was unfortunately adopted by the King. That time might be afforded for the necessary negotiations and preparations, His Majesty informed M. de Bouillé that his intention of going to Montmedy was postponed, but not relinquished.

Since the death of Mirabeau, Talleyrand had united himself more closely with La Fayette, the two brothers La Methe, and other ambitious but narrow-minded partisans of the constituent faction, who, in the plenitude of their treachery and ingratitude to their King, wished to tyrannise over France in his name. This could only be effected by giving him further mortifications, or by heaping on him unexpected indignities; by offering him new insults, or by inspiring him with real alarm for his own safety, as well as for that of his Queen, children and relatives. As a preliminary part of this plan, the exertions of the demagogues, and of La Fayette and Talleyrand in particular, were daily directed to the object of compelling the King to attend Divine service and receive the sacrament from the hands of an apostate priest. For this purpose the Assembly, the clubs and the groups in the streets were assailed with perpetual declamations, and the Jacobin journals were filled with seditious addresses and profane paragraphs.

La Fayette and Talleyrand, in hopes of accomplishing this point, carried impiety, insult and ribaldry even into the Royal Cabinet, while their worthy coadjutors without—the mob and the National Guards—made the palace re-echo their songs, threats and execrations. The people were said to express particular anxiety that the King should receive the sacrament at Easter from Talleyrand, or some other priest of the perjured class. But His Majesty, far from yielding in a point which tormented his conscience, resolved to follow the advice of the Bishop of Clermont, given purely on religious grounds, which was to suspend the Paschal communion; and to avoid the importunities and acts of insolence to which he foresaw this determination would expose him, he resolved to pass that week at St. Cloud. But on the 18th of April, in the morning, as soon as the carriages were drawn out, and the Royal family had taken their seats, they were surrounded by an innumerable mob and banditti, who clamorously insisted that the coaches should not be permitted to pass, mingling with their vociferations the grossest abuse and obscenity, and even insulting the Queen by acts of horrible indecency. La Fayette pretended to clear the way; but his troops, of course, refused to act against the people; and, according to agreement, he was furiously attacked by Danton and

the butcher Le Gendre, who encouraged and directed the proceedings of the rabble. At last, after enduring every species of licentious insult during an hour-and-a-half, the King and the Royal family returned to the palace, which, notwithstanding all the rhetoric of seditious orators, all the artful sophistry of factions, and all the misrepresentations of the municipality and the National Assembly, could not now be considered in any other point of view than as their gaol. The King carried his complaints in person to the Assembly, and persisted in his resolution of visiting St. Cloud; but the Legislature, though they applauded those parts of his speech that promised to maintain the Constitution, and particularly the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, adopted no resolution for facilitating his journey, and His Majesty was forced to submit to the humiliation of renouncing it in silence.

Elated by their triumph, the infidels and factions renewed their violences against the non-juring priests; and the King, feeling sincerely for their situation, accepted, in an evil hour, the tender of counsel and assistance which was made him by the two brothers La Methe, whose ignorance equalled their presumption and treachery, and who, therefore, had been forced to follow the secret guidance of Talleyrand, not yet personally admitted to the council-chamber

of his outraged Sovereign. Accordingly, to save the unfortunate ecclesiastics, who appeared to be exposed to every danger and persecution on his account, he was persuaded to dismiss them from about his person, and even to do violence to his conscience by hearing Mass performed on Easter Day at the church of St. Germaine Auxerre by an apostate priest. In compliance with another advice of the same La Methes, and in contradiction to that of his elder, more loyal and better friends, he adopted the fatal and impolitic measure of writing, on the 23rd of April, to all his ministers at foreign Courts a letter of instructions, from the pen of Talleyrand, enabling them to declare his entire approbation of the Revolution, his desire to maintain the Constitution, and an avowal that he considered himself perfectly free and happy. In vain did M. de Montmorin oppose, by the soundest reasons, the transmission of this disgraceful letter. It was resolved on and executed too suddenly for his arguments to prevail. The National Assembly heard it read with expressions of rapture, and sent, pursuant to Talleyrand's motion to that effect, a deputation to congratulate the King. The Royalists, more clear-sighted and more honest, took no share in these transports; and the Prince himself had the mortification, on the very next day,

to find M. de Montmorin's prophecy verified, the enthusiasm of the moment entirely exhausted, and a party gaining credit by declaring that the professions were too extensive to be sincere. Thus the dupe of the perfidy of traitors, and of the plots of intriguers, the unfortunate well-meaning Monarch, fell a victim to his own patriotism as well as to his own indiscretion.

The visible and great influence which the La Methes, Talleyrand, and other persons of the ruling faction had acquired at Court, alarmed even the Jacobins, who, in consequence, caused a decree to pass, which, to superficial observers, appeared an heroic instance of self-denial, but which was in truth an act of consummate folly, and exposed the kingdom to inevitable evils. It imported that no member of the existing Legislature should be eligible to a seat in the next—a necessary consequence of which was that those who framed the Constitution would have no power of explaining or enforcing its laws; and all the experience which they had acquired in the transaction of business was thrown aside in order to make way for fresh innovators, new speculatists, new systems, and, of course, new parties, new dangers and new violence. They also decreed that no member of any legislative body should accept a place in the

administration till four years after its dissolution. This latter greatly disappointed Talleyrand, who was now in a fair way to see his ambition gratified and his wishes realised in becoming the Superintendent of the Finances—a place formerly, in France, always united with that of a Prime Minister.

During these transactions, the rigour of the King's confinement and the insults he was obliged to sustain were hourly augmenting. His old friends and faithful adherents were debarred from his presence, and he was encompassed with spies, who watched all his words and actions for the purpose of reporting them to his disadvantage and furnishing topics of declamation to the demagogues. The new connection into which he had been drawn with the La Methes, Talleyrand, and other intriguers was attended with no good to counterbalance the infinite prejudice it produced. Their assistance was not sufficiently explicit, nor their exertions sufficiently decided, to repair the effects of that consternation which his letter to the Ambassadors produced in the minds of his friends in all quarters, to countervail the triumph of those who hated, or the despair of those who still adhered to the Crown. The Royalists, in fact, saw their only resource—the only bond of union which they could consistently avow—snatched from them by the

apparently unsolicited declaration of the King, that he approved of a Revolution which deposed him, admired exertions which ruined him, and felt free in a State where every semblance of liberty was denied him.

Mirabeau's plan for placing Louis XVI. at the head of his army to effect a change in the proceedings which threatened to destroy his government, was still pursued; but circumstances were widely altered since the period when it was first proposed, and when it appeared so feasible and proper. The Royal authority was much degraded by repeated shocks; and those who were, from fear of popular tyranny, prepared to rally round the Throne, differed among themselves in almost every principle of government, and detested each other as much as their common foes, the Republicans and the Jacobins. The true and pure Royalists were attached to the old forms with some new improvements, while La Fayette, Talleyrand, and other constitutional Royalists were riveted to the new democratic intrusions. The former considered all the acts of the National Assembly as encroachments which ought to be rescinded; but the latter thought them all wise and reasonable, and desired only to form a strong mound against further innovation. No concordant opinions were entertained

on any great or general subject; and among the parties attached to the King, a discussion on the limits of his authority, on the reinstatement of the Nobility, or on the restoration of the Clergy, would have given birth to endless diversities of opinion and inextinguishable feuds. These diversities of opinion among the King's friends produced great embarrassments in his proceedings; all concurred in the necessity of his escaping from Paris, but, as they agreed in no general view of any subject, each party presented separate plans. After many delays, the day of his departure was at length fixed, and M. de Bouillé received directions to prepare for the King's escape and reception at Montmedy. The instructions were faithfully observed, but the General's situation was much changed for the worst since the project was first recommended. The sphere of his authority was straitened, the number of his troops diminished, and their fidelity shaken by the removal of old and introduction of new regiments. When all the preparations were completed and troops ordered to every station of the journey, the King found it necessary to postpone his departure four-and-twenty hours. This delay, besides deranging the modes of proceeding already fixed, had the further bad effect of rendering the execution of the whole plan doubtful, and

introducing an uncertainty into the minds of some officers, which was productive of great disasters.

At a quarter-of-an-hour before midnight, on the 20th of June, the Royal captives quitted their prison. La Fayette had visited them at a late hour, and in crossing the court-yard they met him twice. Although his conduct suggested some sinister forebodings, the fugitives fortunately, as they thought, gained their carriages in safety, and passed through the Port St. Martin to Bondé. At Montmirel the harness of the King's coach broke, which occasioned a delay of two hours before it could be repaired; and as none of the party thought of despatching a courier to the next detachment of troops, the officers stationed at Pont du Somuelles, contrary to the orders they had received from their General, quitted their post, and spreading through the other detachments the report that the King was not to be expected, proceeded for Varennes. On reaching St. Menehoud, the King was recognised by Drouet, the postmaster of the town, who despatched his son to Varennes. He then permitted the King to depart, but instigated the people to hinder the dragoons from following; and his orders were implicitly obeyed. On his arrival at Varennes, the King was obliged to stop at the entrance of the town, from a disappointment

in the relays; two *gardes de corps* were despatched to seek them, and the Queen herself alighted to gain information. Drouet, accompanied by one Guilleaume, had, however, by a by-road, reached Varennes before them, and prepared measures to restrain their progress. The Royal carriage was stopped under an arch by eight or nine men, stationed for the purpose; and the too humane and good King, having forbidden all resistance which might occasion bloodshed, was, with his family, conducted to a neighbouring house, where the municipality was assembled. The King, instead of commanding, pathetically expostulated for permission to proceed, with his family, to a place of safety, but in vain. A loaded waggon was overturned on the bridge to prevent him proceeding. The tocsin rung for ten leagues round; and legions of armed peasantry poured in to secure the persons of the Royal family, whom they guarded with the utmost vigilance.

Meanwhile, Paris exhibited a scene of consternation and confusion; every party pursued some scheme for promoting its own peculiar views, and every individual felt a portion of the alarm occasioned by a great and unexpected crisis. La Fayette, after despatching his aide-de-camp, M. de Romeuf, in pursuit of the King, sent for Talleyrand, Barnave and the

two La Methes to consult together. The Duke of Orleans collected round him Sieyes, Sillery, Voidel, and others his accomplices. The National Assembly deliberated, the Jacobins trembled and threatened, and the Cordeliers raved. The parties without doors, and particularly the new-formed Republican faction, were employed with great activity in endeavouring to give a bias to the public mind. The coffee-houses were generally crowded, and the shops and the theatres shut. A band, consisting of the dregs of the mob, paraded the streets, headed by Hebert, the author and editor of "Père Duchesne," throwing down and trampling under foot all signs of the King and Queen, and all emblems of royalty. Hand-bills abusing the Royal family were profusely distributed. A pamphlet entitled *Mémoires du ci-devant Roi* was hawked in the streets, and numbers of libels against the unfortunate Queen were sold or given away in the Palais Royal by the booksellers in the pay of the Duke of Orleans. The majority of citizens, however, viewed these proceedings with apprehension and alarm, which they testified by repeated enquiries, and by an unusual solemnity and earnestness of demeanour. The author was at that time at Paris, and witnessed what he relates. He has had the misfortune to be present at the horrid

catastrophes of the 14th of July, and of the 5th and 6th of October, 1789; of the federation of the 14th July, 1790; of the insurrection and insult offered the King on the 10th of June; his imprisonment on the 10th of August; and the massacres of prisoners on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th of September, 1792. At all these periods the Parisian mobs and Jacobin banditti were insolent, audacious and cruel, because they were certain of little or no opposition, and apprehended nothing. But, during the King's journey to Varennes, few, if any, acts of violence were offered, and no person lost his life. All parties, equally guilty and equally treacherous, then suspected each other, and dreaded the return of order and justice. A rebellious rabble, as well as rebellious individuals, are moderate and prudent from dread of punishment, or turbulent and daring from being certain of impunity. The government that has authority and means enough to enforce with vigour obedience to the laws, but neglects it, commits a suicide, and may be justly deemed a social *felo de se*.

On the evening of the 23rd of June, La Fayette's aide-de-camp arrived at Varennes, and the next day the Royal family—notwithstanding their earnest entreaties, and some endeavours of M. de Bouillé,

rendered ineffectual by the contrary orders of the good King—were obliged to accompany him back to Paris. They travelled by short stages, under the escort of 6,000 National Guards, who were in their way augmented to 20,000, including all the disorderly vagabonds that could be collected. The King and Queen had the mortification of seeing their faithful attendants arrested, chained and ill-treated at Varennes; and in their first day's journey had the still greater horror of seeing M. de Dampierre, an old nobleman of Champagne, murdered by the side of their coach for merely endeavouring to show them some marks of respect. He fell, pierced with three musket-balls, crying "Vive le roi!" while his assassins, savagely yelling, drowned his voice with shouts of "Vive la nation!"

While the Royal captives were thus proceeding towards the capital, the Assembly was engaged in receiving deputations and framing decrees. On the 22nd, at ten o'clock at night, the welcome tidings of the King's arrest reached them, and they immediately decreed that Latour-Maubourg, Petion and Barnave, all distinguished for their opposition to the Court, and Dumas, Adjutant-General of the National Guard, should escort the *State prisoners* to Paris. Talleyrand was offered by the Assembly

to be one of the deputies entrusted with this *honourable* mission; but, for reasons best known to himself, he declined the honour. On the 25th, the Assembly was informed that the Royal family would arrive in the capital between two and three o'clock in the afternoon, and decreed, in consequence, that, on their entrance into the castle of the Tuileries, the King, the Queen and the Dauphin should be separately guarded, and their declarations heard without delay, to serve as a basis for the proceedings of the Assembly.

The Royal family in their slow progress to Paris were surrounded by an immense multitude, and it was more than once suspected that attempts would be made against their lives. In the carriage with the King, Queen, Princess Elizabeth, the Dauphin and Princess Royal, sat the three commissioners from the Assembly. This crowd, the heat of the day, and the dust raised by the guards and the mob, incommoded them almost to fainting; but their complaints excited only derision or insult. On their arrival in the capital, they were received with gloomy silence and studied disrespect. An order was placarded importing that whoever applauded the King should be bastinadoed, whoever insulted him, applauded. At his appearance La Fayette called out,

"Hats on! Let nobody be uncovered!"[1] and, in the immense crowd, no one person had the courage to disobey. The National Guards were forbidden to present their arms, and the three faithful *gardes de corps* who attended the Royal family in their journey, being brought into the city, bound and chained to the coachman's box of the King's carriage, were with difficulty rescued alive from the Jacobin banditti, who, after firing at them with pistols and stabbing them with daggers, attempted, even in the palace court-yard of the Tuileries, to tear them to pieces.

Since the Revolution, after the murder of Louis XVI., took a turn unexpected by the conspirators of different preceding factions, they all, except the Jacobins, accused each other of the wretchedness of France, as well as of their private sufferings and of being the cause of both, in betraying the confidence of their King with respect to his journey to Montmedy. That Drouet, who stopped his Sovereign, was a tool in the hand of traitors there is little doubt; but who these traitors were, notwithstanding

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1 The author saw the Royal captives pass on the boulevards, and heard La Fayette repeatedly order the people to keep on their hats. Even hairdressers, who at Paris during the summer walk without hats, were commanded by him to tie handkerchiefs round their heads as signs of contempt.

the researches of able historians, remains still undecided. During the terrible anarchy in 1793 and 1794 and the licentiousness of the Press during the same period, everything which could expose or inculpate defeated or rival factions was printed; but on account of the general league against France and her desolating and anti-social doctrine, all communication was cut off with other States, and their publications, though curious and useful (since they contained authentic materials for writing the history of the times), disappeared with the party that had made them public, or, after Robespierre's death, were bought up by the more politic members of the Committee of Public Safety, to preserve *intact* the *honour* and *patriotism* of the pillars of the Revolution, or, as they were called, "The Patriots of 1789." To these occurrences it may certainly be ascribed that so few of the numerous French works and pamphlets of these years found their way into this country. Among these, the correspondence captured in the houses of emigrants during the domiciliary visits or sequestrations, or seized among their luggage during the campaigns in Champagne and Brabant in 1792, and in Alsace and the Palatinate in 1793, are very interesting, and were printed by the order, of the Government and threw considerable

light on some catastrophes of the Revolution and on the conduct of persons who figured in them.

Two letters from Talleyrand to the Countess of F——t prove that Louis XVI. was betrayed; that women about the Queen were the traitors; that La Fayette, Talleyrand, and the two La Methes, with Barnave, were in their confidence; and that these faithless men—whose object was to utterly extinguish the influence of the emigrants or true Royalists, and to force the King to govern for the future according to their views—were the principal plotters of this disgrace brought on their Prince, and the dreadful consequences that have followed for their country and Europe. The first letter is dated June 21st, at six o'clock in the morning:

"I cannot, as I intended, breakfast with you to-day. As I supposed last night, the bird is uncaged and flown. The commander, La Fayette, is waiting for me, and we shall take such measures, by clipping his wings, as that no future flight can be apprehended. The Coblentz bird-catchers shall, to their disgrace and ruin, be forced to acknowledge our superior adroitness, and experience that it is more easy to get in than to get out of our snares. Do not be uneasy. Paris and the patriots will show themselves *calm and great*. In some few days the

Revolution will be perfect. La Fayette sends, *pro forma*, a trusty officer in pursuit of the fugitives, whom, according to our infallible arrangements, he will find both snug and safe."

The second letter is of the 26th of June:

"Tell Mesdames Campan and Trouin to apprehend nothing. If the Queen suspects them and turns them away,[1] their patriotism shall secretly be rewarded by the Assembly; and they shall, at all events, be no losers by the great services they have performed. It was necessary to let Gouvion, the governor of the palace of the Tuileries, into the secret; but, notwithstanding his bluntness, he is discretion itself. As to La Fayette and myself, we can have no doubt or fear; but neither the La Methes nor Barnave knew by whom the nation was to be served, though they were well acquainted with our precautions to prevent the ruin of the patriots and of the Revolution. Had the Capets agreed to my plan of retiring to Lyons, or of La Fayette's to adjourn to Rouen, they would not have been in their present dilemma, nor brought on us opposers worse than those at Coblentz—I mean the Republicans, whose dangerous activity it requires all our popu-

[1] They were chamber-maids to the Queen.

larity and efforts to combat and to vanquish. Did I not act well in not accepting of the place of a deputy to meet the fugitives? La Tour Maubourg and Petion, for their brutality, are blamed by all moderate men and execrated by the staunch Royalists, whilst Barnave, for his civility, is now suspected by the patriots, and has been denounced by the Jacobins."

The National Assembly had, according to the proposal of Talleyrand, decreed that the examinations of the King and the Queen should be taken by commissioners from their body; but those of the other persons arrested, by the commissary of the section of the Tuileries. The King would not submit to an examination, but consented to explain the facts referred to in the decree. He assigned as motives of his departure the insults to which he had been exposed on the 18th of April, and the pamphlets published to excite violence against himself and family. As these insults remained unpunished, and he expected neither safety nor common decency while he remained at Paris, he wished to leave it; but was obliged to quit the palace privately, and without attendants, because it would have been impossible to do it publicly. He did not intend to fly the kingdom, nor had he concerted his plans with foreign Powers, or with his relations, or any other

Frenchman who had quitted the kingdom. As a proof that he did not mean to leave France, he observed that apartments were prepared for him at Montmedy—a place which he selected because it was fortified and near the frontiers, where he could have repelled an invasion, if attempted. He explained these complaints in the memorial he left behind at his departure, referring to the manner in which the constitutional decrees had been separately presented to him; but declared that, having in the course of his journey found the public opinion decidedly in favour of the Constitution, he had become convinced how necessary it was for the prosperity of this Constitution to give force to the powers established to maintain public order. The moment he was acquainted with the public will, he did not hesitate to sacrifice his own individual feelings and interests to the happiness of the people; and he would willingly forget the sufferings and disagreeable events he had experienced to restore peace and tranquillity to the nation. The Queen's declaration, which was short, corroborated in some points what had been explained by the King, and expressed her firm resolution to accompany him on every occasion; but had he designed to quit the kingdom, she would have used all her influence to dissuade him.

The declarations of both Their Majesties were composed by Talleyrand, according to their desire, and for which he received £2,500. An equal sum was promised him and paid him for causing these declarations not only to be approved by the other leaders of the Constitutional party, but for persuading them to accompany their approbation with a threat, as the only means of averting the design which was now openly professed of bringing the King and the Queen to trial. M. de Bouillé, who had escaped from France, also wrote to the Assembly, avowing himself the only instigator of the journey—a measure which drew on him the honourable censure of that body, but did not serve the Royal cause so much as this brave and loyal warrior expected.

The exertions of the new Republican faction to procure the King's trial, now gave serious alarm, not only to the pure Royalists, but to the pretended friends of the revolutionary monarchical constitution. At the instigation of the Republicans, addresses and petitions were daily presented, requiring the King's deposition, and even his execution. Condorcet, Brissot and Thomas Paine established a periodical paper, called *Le Republicain*, in which they boldly avowed opinions hostile to monarchical government; but the idea of abolishing the Royal office was not

yet made familiar to the public mind, and they were answered by Talleyrand, Abbé Sieyes, and other writers in the pay of the Court or of the Duke of Orleans. An opinion more current and more acceptable, promoted by Talleyrand and Barnave, was, that the King would be deposed, the Dauphin proclaimed, and a Regent or Council of Regency established during his minority. The decree for taking this young Prince's education out of the hands of his parents and bestowing it on some persons appointed by themselves, gave a colour to this opinion; and the Duke of Orleans recommended himself to popularity by renouncing all claim, which his faction and the Constitution might give him, to the office of Regent. This proceeding excited various animadversions. The Duke was known to be, at the same period, actually plotting to the King's prejudice; and it was proved that his renunciation of the Regency was made in hopes that the Assembly would call him to the throne, with which he had been flattered so often by Talleyrand, Sieyes, Sillery, Petion, and his other accomplices.

While intrigue was thus busy in every quarter among the factious and seditious against the unfortunate Sovereign, he, together with his Queen and

family, were the victims of increased and unrestrained insolence. La Fayette, Talleyrand, Barnave, and the La Methes, the leading members of the Constitutional faction, regularly met and deliberated. They agreed that, in order to terrify the King into full obedience, and to remove the imputation cast on them by the Jacobins and Republicans of having been accessory to his escape, it was necessary to watch the Royal captives with unceasing jealousy and to confine them with the utmost severity. They were not permitted either to see, speak or write to each other; and no person was allowed to speak to or wait on them, except with La Fayette's permission and in the presence of the officer of the National Guard on duty. Every hour in the night, as well as day, the sentries placed in their apartments—even in their bedrooms—were relieved; and the prisoners were to answer when called, to prove their presence. Guards were also placed on the roof of the palace; and it was justly observed of La Fayette that this revolutionary general, with the office, had acquired the manners of a gaoler —treating his virtuous and patriotic Prince with the most brutal insolence, and the Queen and her children in such a manner as to rouse indignation and inspire compassion even in the soldiers about them, though selected as the most unfeeling of their corps.

To this barbarous conduct of La Fayette, Louis XVI. ascribed all his future sufferings from his Jacobin gaolers and *sans-culotte* assassins. Had not La Fayette at this period, after carrying his Sovereign in triumph through the streets of Paris, shut him up a prisoner in the palace of the Tuileries, the Jacobins would not, fourteen months afterwards, have dared to drag him publicly a prisoner from this same palace to the Temple. Had not La Fayette, in 1791, degraded monarchy in the person of his King, the Jacobins would never have had the savage ferocity, in 1793, after abolishing monarchy, to butcher their Sovereign. As this stupid but audacious rebel was always advised by Talleyrand, and some few other accomplices like him—debased noblemen—it is against him and against them that the curses of mankind ought to be pronounced for all the misery since endured. The revolutionary rabble, in imitating the examples of their revolutionary superiors, surpassed them indeed in enormities; but this is nothing but a natural consequence. The virtuous, delicate and sensible minds of Louis XVI., of his Royal consort, and of his immaculate sister, the Princess Elizabeth, endured more from the stings inflicted by the studied and refined cruelty of La Fayette and his gang, than from the death-blows they soon afterwards received

from their successors and disciples, the bloodthirsty Jacobins.[1]

The task of framing a report on the events of the 21st of June was referred to the united committees of the Assembly on the motion of Talleyrand, who had now ingratiated himself so far as to be the secret and confidential counsellor of Louis XVI.; but while they were preparing their opinion the city was agitated by innumerable pamphlets and placards, accusations and denunciations. The question whether the King should be put on his trial occupied all conversation, and everyone decided on it as his affection or hatred, his hopes or his fears, his private judgment or the dictates of his party suggested. All the debates in the National Assembly, though not directly referring to this subject, were so conducted as to show that it chiefly, if not solely, engaged the thoughts of the members. The Royalists were wisely silent on almost every

1 The dastardly traitor, La Fayette, is treated by Bonaparte as he deserves. Last June, after the usurper's emperor-making, he demanded permission to go to America, which was obtained upon condition of giving up, for a pension of £250, all his property to his son, who is a colonel under the Corsican. The friend of liberty, and the promulgator of the rights of man, then withdrew his petition, and declared himself ready to continue a submissive slave to the upstart tyrant, preferring bondage and property to liberty and equality.—*Les Nouvelles à la Main*, Messidor, year xii. No. 3, page 4.

occasion, since their exertions would only have given additional vigour and popularity to the Republicans, and, perhaps, disgusted or terrified the Constitutionalists, who were now bought over, and, therefore, openly began to espouse the Royal cause. But, though they were silent in the hall of the Legislature, they published an address to the people, which produced a powerful effect in favour of their cause: it was circulated throughout the kingdom, with the recommendation of 290 of their signatures. None of them were either placemen or pensioners of the Court, but none had either been the instigators, promoters, protectors or accomplices of rebellion. Their pure, disinterested and spirited loyalty upheld the undermined and tottering Throne for some few months longer.

Though the unmerited misfortunes of Louis XVI. ought to have excited the indignation and roused to arms all other legitimate princes, no soldier was ordered into the field, and the Spanish Ambassador at Paris was the only diplomatic agent who, in the name of his master, presented a mild, conciliatory note in favour of the enchained Sovereign. The manner in which it was noticed by the French rebels was another serious warning disregarded by kings as well as by their counsellors. The Spanish note was, without being

honoured with a public reading, referred to the Diplomatic Committee; and according to the report made in its name by Talleyrand, the National Assembly treated it with great rudeness and democratical insolence, and ordered *their* Minister for Foreign Affairs to answer that, "France would never interfere in the affairs of other nations, nor permit their interference in hers"; or, which is the same thing, "whenever a set of plunderers and murderers in France succeeded in overturning the lawful government of their country and elected for their chief the most wicked or barbarous of their accomplices, whether a Robespierre or a Bonaparte, though, by such an outrage, they encouraged crimes and rebellion in all other States, foreign sovereigns are bound to send new credentials to their representatives in France, and to salute the vile and guilty usurper as their equal." This revolutionary diplomacy has since been adopted by Talleyrand under the Directory, as well as under the Consulate; but had sovereigns known their danger and ministers done their duty in 1791, loyalty and religion would not have been trampled upon by rebellion and atheism, and Bonaparte, instead of audaciously dictating to princes, would have quietly commanded a company of cannoneers, obeying in a barrack instead of ruling in a palace.

At length the united committees declaring themselves prepared, the names of the members of the Assembly were called over, and the 13th of July was appointed for hearing the report. On that day the author of these Memoirs published his first and youthful mite in the cause of suffering royalty, in a tract of thirty-two pages, entitled, *Le Regne de Louis XVI. mis sous les yeux de l'Europe*, which, at his own expense, he printed and profusely distributed.[1] He has been happy since to read in several histories, annals and memoirs of these times that it is supposed to have produced the most beneficial effects among the members of the Assembly, and even the public.[2]

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1 This, as well as all other publications of the author, either in English or French, with the sole exception of "The Revolutionary Plutarch," were printed at his own expense, given away to booksellers, or distributed gratis among the people. For this his name is found upon the list of proscription, but he defies anybody to find it either on the Civil List of Princes or Republicans. Those whose selfish hearts judge others according to their own vile passions may suspect the existence of disinterested loyalty; but that man is an infamous calumniator who says that the author has received from the Bourbon Princes any presents or remuneration for his literary productions more than for his military exertions. He has served and shall still serve them to the utmost of his power, but they shall never know who he is before they are restored to their rank in France.

2 See *La Grande Trahison de La Fayette, Bailly, Talleyrand, &c.*, p. 9. In the note it is falsely asserted that the supposed author,

Muguet de Nanthou, reporter from the united committees, recited all the facts drawn from the declarations of the King and Queen and the examinations of other persons. He discussed at length the question whether the King should be brought to trial. On the first point it was considered as demonstrated that the whole blame must be ascribed to the Marquis de Bouillé, and, on the other, that both the Constitution and simple reason proved the negative. This report was debated with great fierceness during the two days, in which the Constitutional party would not press their advantages to the utmost, but indulged the wild speculations of Robespierre, Petion, Rewbel and Merlin, and permitted the reading of many incendiary petitions from the Jacobins and other anarchists. A decree was at length adopted on the 16th, enacting, that if the King, after having sworn to the Constitution, should retract, or if he should put himself at the head of a military force, or direct his generals to act against the nation, or forbear to oppose any such attempt by an authentic act, he should be judged to have abdicated the throne and should then be considered as a simple citizen and

Mallet du Pan, had received 1,000 louis d'or for this tract; and *La Politique d'un Infame Périgord*, p. 22, states its utility, and that it was written by a *Volunteer* Royalist, an English *Jacobite*.

subject to impeachment in the ordinary forms for all crimes committed after his abdication. Immediately after this decree, which had been penned by Talleyrand, the Assembly proceeded to the vote on that relative to the events of the 21st of June, and decided exactly in the mode prescribed by the report of the committees.

So sudden a termination of the question was considered, and really was, a manœuvre of La Fayette, Talleyrand, the La Methes, and Barnave, for preventing, or at least stopping, the efforts of the Orleans and Republican faction, who were known to be very busy in plotting among the clubs and the sections, preparing petitions, arranging deputations and exciting insurrections. This opinion is confirmed by the conduct of Robespierre, who, in a transport of fury, rushed out of the hall of the Assembly, exclaiming to the mob that surrounded it: "All is lost, my friends; the King is to be restored!" The true Royalists, although sensible of the dangers from which the Royal family had been rescued, were not entirely satisfied with the termination of the affair, and that with reason. They saw with just horror a system established which shamefully proposed, and supposed as a possible case, the deposition of the hereditary monarch; and they were indignant at

another decree, by which he was still suspended from the exercise of his functions until the completion and acceptance of the Constitution. For the pretended favourable decree concerning the King's journey to Varennes, His Majesty signed *bons* to Talleyrand, and other French patriots, to the amount of £125,000, to be paid by his treasurer of the Civil List within four months after his restoration to authority. From this may be concluded that French *patriotism*, though a common, is not a cheap commodity.

The unpaid patriots, or the parties that formed the minority in the National Assembly, would not, however, resign the hope of obtaining, through the medium of the people, some alteration of the decision. In their dens they held councils, and meetings were planned for the purpose of organising an insurrection, under pretence of preparing a petition. But in these meetings a schism appeared between the parties, which afterwards produced important consequences. Some were anxious to frame the petition in terms which would favour the abolition of royalty; but La Clos, a confidential associate and trusty agent of the Duke of Orleans, proposed a paragraph which made an opening for the ascension of his patron to the throne. This addition was

objected to by Brissot, and in some copies of the petition omitted, though it was retained in others. The paper was drawn up by a committee of the Jacobin and Cordeliers' Clubs, but copies were sent to every collection of the mob at Paris, and the next day was appointed to receive signatures on the altar of the country in the Champ de Mars. This altar, erected in the name of public gratitude to Robespierre, had the following curious inscription:

A CELUI QUI A BIEN MERITÉ
DE LA PATRIE:
ROBESPIERRE.

To the disgrace of France, and to the shame of Europe, the throne of Bonaparte is erected on the same foundation as the altars of his worthy predecessor Robespierre. These two great criminals, at the period of their elevation equally guilty, could claim nothing from public gratitude; but a gibbet was due to their atrocities by public justice.

The municipality, apprised of the intentions of the conspirators, issued a proclamation forbidding all assemblies in groups, and ordered their commissioners and the Commander-in-Chief of the National Guard to employ all the means with which the law invested

them for the maintenance of tranquillity. The mob were, however, not to be so deterred. They assembled, and commenced the day by hanging as aristocrats a hairdresser and an invalid soldier. Three members of the municipality who attended were pelted with stones; and La Fayette's life was endangered by a pistol which was discharged at him, at a small distance, by the journeyman printer Brune, at present Bonaparte's Field-Marshal, and lately his Ambassador to the Ottoman Porte. This assassin was secured, but La Fayette, with ill-timed generosity, or rather from fear and timidity, suffered him to depart, though he confined several who had been throwing stones—*but they were without arms.* The violence of the mob still increasing, the municipality ordered martial law to be proclaimed; the red flag was accordingly exhibited from the windows of the Town Hall, and at seven o'clock in the evening a detachment of the National Guard marched to the scene of riot. A violent outcry was immediately raised of "Down with the red flag! Down with the bayonets!" Stones, and even some discharges of musketry followed, when the military were ordered to fire over the heads of the people. This harmless explosion only augmented their audacity; but after sustaining repeated insults and violences, the National Guard

fired with ball, killed and wounded a considerable number and put the rest to flight.

This was the first time since the Revolution that the military had not refused to fire on the people, and the first time the Parisian National Guard had condescended to disperse riotous or rebellious mobs. The majority of the National Assembly heard this exploit reported with infinite delight, approving the conduct of the municipality, by whose orders the red flag continued to be displayed till the 7th of August. La Fayette, Talleyrand and the other members of the Constitutional party pursued their victory by obtaining a decree against all who should by placards, advertisements, pamphlets or speeches excite insurrection, murder, pillage or disobedience to the law, and enacting that all accomplices should be punished as principals. This decree, which was a severe libel on all the previous proceedings of the Assembly, passed with little opposition. It had the effect of terrifying, even to a degree of ridiculous panic, some of the boldest and most forward Republicans. But as it was followed by no effectual exertion, except the seizure of a few printing presses, and an order to arrest some seditious journalists which was never executed, the clubs soon resumed their meetings,

the journalists their audacity, and the intriguers their correspondence. Long before the red flag was removed from the Town Hall, the massacre of the Champ de Mars was pointed out for execration and vengeance, not against the actors and perpetrators, but against their then imprisoned victim, Louis XVI.

That the ruling party was not without their apprehensions during this contest with their rivals of the Orleans and Republican factions, is evident from the moderation with which they used the advantages obtained by their victory in the Champ de Mars. Hitherto, since the Revolution, the aristocrats only had bled, and the *patriotic* brigands had, with approbation as well as with impunity, ranged in quest of prey and spoil; but by the late scene, the new and revolutionary aristocracy had destroyed their own offspring—the sovereignty of the people, the rights of man, and the sacred duty of insurrection, so often decreed, extolled, promised and proclaimed. The fact is that, by their own impolitic, unfeeling, scandalous and dangerous example, they were reduced to the deplorable alternative of either seeing their revolutionary progeny become parricides, or of becoming infanticides themselves. They, therefore, did not long deliberate about the choice; but even in their chastise-

ments they showed a paternal tenderness, which they themselves did not expect to experience had the fortune of the day declared against them. Their real situation, their present intrigues and their future views are tolerably well explained in a letter from Talleyrand to his *bonne amie* the Countess of F——t, dated July 18th, eight o'clock in the evening:

"You may now send me back the effects deposited with you. The storm has blown over, and we are safe. Had not the day been ours, we should sooner have restored Louis his former power, and trusted to his clemency, than have entered into terms with our sanguinary opposers. We have now, at the same time, got the key to their secrets and to the King's Cabinet. With the crimes of the former we are as well acquainted as with the weakness of the latter, whose authority we shall make use of to keep down our enemies or to punish them. Last night everything was finally settled and sealed in the Château. Though, in consequence of the absurd decree, we cannot occupy ostensible and public places, no law prevents the King from employing us as private advisers or secret counsellors. The Government will, therefore, be for the future entirely in our hands. The General[1] is to have the Military department;

1 La Fayette.

Le Dauphinois[1] that of Justice and of the Interior; L'Aîné,[2] the Navy; Le Cadet,[3] the Finances; and the Foreign Affairs are to be directed by me—that is to say, nothing can be done in these respective departments without our knowledge or assent. Since I found out the deranged state of our finances, which during the present confusion must increase, I have renounced my former ideas of having anything to do with them. We must now hasten to finish our constitutional task, which alone can set our poor prisoner at liberty, or, rather, exchange the fetters of the nation for ours. Embrace our Charles. I shall be with you to-morrow night."

Thus Talleyrand in this letter discloses the secret and the true motive of the actions and transactions of all those men who, with him, raised the standard of rebellion, whose disinterestedness and love of liberty excited such a general enthusiasm. They wanted, at any rate, power and places—whether as freemen, slaves, or tyrants, was the same to them. Their country and their countrymen came in for nothing in their ambitious speculations. They divide between themselves with more *sang-froid* the govern-

1 Barnave.
2 Alexander la Metha.
3 Charles la Metha.

ment of France than the Roman triumvirs did the provinces of the Roman Republic. Their King they regard as a mere tool in their hands, with his rank and name to impose upon the public; and to whom they even talk of restoring his lost authority, as the last resource against contending factions. His sufferings are unnoticed as well as unlamented; but sooner than endanger their personal safety, they are determined to put everything upon a former footing, notwithstanding all the innocent blood spilt for liberty, all the fine speeches made for liberty, and the general overthrow of rank and property decreed to obtain what they called liberty. From La Fayette to Napoleon Bonaparte, all the *heroes* of the French Revolution have individually shown themselves despicable and selfish cowards; all noble, generous and patriotic sentiments have been banished from their depraved minds; their guilty imagination saw everywhere plots and conspiracies. To preserve their own dear persons from these supposed attempts, dungeons have been crowded, scaffolds erected, kingdoms laid waste, and nations ruined. And, unfortunately, the world is not now nearer the end of these horrors than it was sixteen years ago. The infancy of the Revolution has been long, sanguinary and turbulent; and it is still in its cradle.

When the Assembly thus formally renounced the sacred duty of insurrection, they resigned their charter of popularity. They proceeded in the completion of the Constitution beset with general contempt, and their dissolution was earnestly desired by all parties. By the Royalists, because it would be the period of the King's release from confinement and political annihilation; and by the factions, because it would occasion changes favourable to their projects and plots. The revision of the Constitution produced long debates, in which none but the speakers interested themselves. Talleyrand now spoke often, and always in favour of the Court, for which he was liberally paid; but neither he nor his party, when free from personal dangers, had sufficient virtue or magnanimity to procure the King the portion of authority necessary for preserving the monarchy; nor would the Assembly take any effectual measures for prosecuting those incendiaries who were repeatedly denounced for acts of violence and exhortations to insurrection in the departments.

The mode in which the Constitution was to be presented for the King's acceptance occasioned the most strenuous debates, and produced some smart contests between avowed royalty and republicanism slightly concealed. When the Assembly, with great confusion, had completed its readings and revisions,

the new code was presented to the King for his pure and simple acceptance or rejection. A deputation of sixty members, one of whom was Talleyrand, waited on him for this purpose. All comment and explanation being forbidden, he first, on the 13th of September, accepted the Constitution in writing, and then, two days afterwards, bound himself to maintain it by an oath. He was now allowed to enjoy a little more liberty than before; that is to say, he was permitted to walk in the garden of his palace for a couple of hours every morning, accompanied and watched by the officers of the National Guard on duty. This was, perhaps, found necessary to obviate the charge of his not being free when he accepted it. As more Jacobins were in prison on account of the riots in the Champ de Mars than Royalists in consequence of the journey to Varennes, La Fayette, out of tenderness to the former, obtained a decree that all persons arrested should be set at liberty, all legal proceedings relative to the events of the Revolution superseded, and the use of passports and temporary restraints discontinued. Yet, when the King attended in the hall to take the oath, his coming was preceded by a debate, in consequence of which the Order of the Holy Ghost was abolished. The members, instead of paying the accustomed respect of standing while

he spoke, sat down, and his chair was reduced by a rule to the size of the President's, who sat on a level with him, and on his right hand. Several other studied insults, congenial with the unfeeling character of these successful rebels, were, besides, heaped on this unfortunate Sovereign.

The new Constitution was a ridiculous system, neither Monarchical nor Republican, in which, for want of a blending medium—a permanent aristocracy —the two extremes could never meet. No authority was sufficiently established in force, nor were means left for its maintenance by popular respect. The people, in the widest sense of the word, were left to govern themselves; and all who obtained, even by their momentary favour, the exercise of temporary authority, were exposed without protection to the brutalities which caprice, suspicion or fury might excite against them. The able and loyal French writer, M. Montjoye, gives the following accurate, just and spirited description of this deformed first-born of the modern philosophers La Fayette, Talleyrand and Co.:

"Never did the union of folly and madness beget a more monstrous offspring. This pretended Constitution presented to the eye a misshapen machine, whimsically composed of an infinity of wheels, without any mutual relation or dependence. Experience

has shown that it was not in the power of man to put its grotesque springs in motion. The government framed by these presumptuous legislators was neither monarchical, aristocratical, nor popular. Their Constitutional Act might at best be considered as the basis of an anarchical monarchy—that is, a real chimera, for death and life cannot subsist in the same body. Had this monster been able to live, those who begot it took great precautions that it should be strangled in the cradle. They had taken from the kingdom its religion; they had annihilated the public force, disorganised the military, and armed those who ought to contribute to the exigencies of the State. And that nothing might be wanting to the deformity of their work, they carefully destroyed every barrier which could prevent the attacks of usurpation or despotism."

It ought not to be passed over in silence that, after this *chef d'œuvre* had been proclaimed at Paris on the 18th of September, the ensuing Sunday a grand *Te Deum*, or "thanksgiving for the end of the Revolution," was performed in the church of Notre Dame, where another grand *Te Deum*, or "thanksgiving for the end of the Revolution," was again celebrated with great solemnity on the 2nd of December, 1804. Talleyrand was present on both

these occasions, doubtless with equal devotion, satisfaction and sincerity; though, during the terrible interval, from a faithless subject of the patriotic Louis XVI. he had been transformed into the faithful slave of a barbarous assassin and Corsican tyrant.

Immediately after his acceptance of the Constitution, Louis XVI., according to the advice of Talleyrand, in a circular letter, informed all other Sovereigns and States of this event. Those French diplomatic agents in foreign Courts who had loyalty enough to refuse the oath to the Constitution were recalled, and others appointed in their place. Several foreign Courts declined admitting these revolutionary emissaries, and in consequence discontinued all regular and usual communication with the French Monarch, surrounded as he was with traitors, gaolers and assassins. Indeed, it could hardly be expected that the other branches of the House of Bourbon would without indignation behold the chief of their line detained in unmerited captivity by his own subjects, and the Princes of the Blood seeking shelter and soliciting precarious protection in foreign Courts; or that the Emperor could without impatience hear of the intolerable indignities offered by the lowest of mankind to his own sister. Talleyrand had, therefore, no easy task to conciliate so many injured parties and such various and opposite

interests. It was become notorious in France that he as well as Barnave and the La Methes were secret members of the King's Council. As such they were denounced by the deputies of the new Legislature, calumniated by the Jacobins, and libelled by their journalists. With the activity and plans of their internal enemies they were too well acquainted not to fear more from their violence than from the complaints, representations, and even armaments of foreigners, with whom the Republican faction neglected no opportunity to embroil France, either by indirect acts of alarm and provocation, or by a direct declaration of an intent to produce a universal republic by a general insurrection.

To establish a commonwealth in France, and to overthrow all thrones abroad, Brissot and all other French Republicans declared it absolutely necessary "to carry fire and sword into the four corners of the world," as they expressed it, or, in other words, to involve all States in warfare with each other, or against France. Talleyrand was not long without observing that this opinion had adherents even in the King's closet, and among those who had hitherto been firm supporters of monarchical governments. He remarked that among the Republicans there reigned not only audacity and personal union, but

unity of views—"a total subversion"—whilst the Monarchists were divided amongst themselves, suspecting each other, acting without plan as well as without energy, possessing no point round which to rally in case of attack, and no place of refuge in case of defeat. Having already deserted his God and his King to join the Orleans faction, which, in its turn, he left from avarice, he did not long hesitate in again betraying his King by going over to the Republicans. In a letter to the Countess of F——t, of the 29th October, he opens his mind on this subject without reserve:

"From what I see every day," says he, "I am convinced of the justness and truth of Mirabeau's last words. Monarchy is certainly descending with rapidity into the grave; I must, therefore, be careful not to be buried with it. I have, within these few days, had several overtures from the Republicans; but as I suspected that it was merely to sound the ground, no notice has been taken of them. I shall, however, not neglect to render them some services *à propos*, which may in time encourage them to speak out. The next time you see Chauvelin, endeavour to find out if my suspicions are well founded. I really think that he is not in his place at Court, but that the Republicans have placed him there

merely to watch the King and those about his person. But to be well acquainted with his sentiments, you must begin with forgetting your own. Yes! you must seem a convert to republicanism. Read and quote 'Le Patriote Français,' by Brissot; 'La Chronique de Paris,' by Condorcet; and even 'L'Ami du Peuple,' by Marat. As he will declare his surprise at seeing you in such company, you may say that it is by my desire, being disgusted with the lukewarm patriotism of the Monarchists. Take his word of honour not to divulge your conversation to anybody. If he keeps his promise, he will do you no harm; if he breaks it, he will serve me, without hurting you. I am much mistaken in my man if the latter will not be the case. Your prudence will suggest the propriety of concealing the above journals whenever La Fayette, Barnave, or the La Methes pay you any visits. With them, of course, you must continue as staunch a Constitutionalist as ever."

By the adroitness of his mistress, Talleyrand soon came to a good understanding with Chauvelin. The latter had from his youth been received at Court. To the bounty of the King both he and his father were indebted for everything they possessed. Perceiving him to be of a weak and unprincipled character,

the Jacobins and Republicans easily and early engaged him to be a spy about the Royal family. In this *honourable* post he was the more useful to them because he was esteemed by his Prince as an inoffensive and safe companion, neither tormented by ambition nor led astray by cupidity.

Under date the 24th of November, Talleyrand wrote to the same lady:

"After spending all the morning of yesterday at Court, Chauvelin and I supped last night at the Mayor's, with Robespierre, Brissot, Guadet and Roland. They have communicated their plans to me, which are well combined, formidable and *patriotic*. In return I have promised, and shall be of service to them, because I am firmly convinced that things cannot continue as they are. We must either recall the implacable emigrants or proclaim a republic. In the former case I have nothing but humiliation to expect from their injured pride, or persecution from their unrelenting vengeance. Connected as I now am, I have, on the contrary, everything to hope and nothing to fear from the Republicans, to whom I am, besides, necessary in more respects than one.

"Petion speaks with great satisfaction, and even affection, of his reception in London, and of the

enthusiasm of the English for our Revolution. Their determination of breaking their fetters in imitation of us is decidedly fixed. He is convinced that England alone contains more real Republicans than all the other States of Europe together, not only among the people, but among the Nobility, the Clergy and the Capitalists, who have unanimously applauded his zeal and encouraged him to continue his efforts in the cause of equality and liberty. They not only devour with avidity all our patriotic tracts and writings, but cause them to be translated and gratuitously distributed among the lower classes, particularly in their populous cities and in their manufacturing towns. Clubs are as regularly organised in England, Scotland, and Ireland, as in France; and the *friends of the constitution* there correspond as regularly as we do here. They talk as loudly of *reform* as we do, and use the same means and the same activity to procure it. *Their object is the same as ours*, and their success *must* be the same. There, as well as here, some few aristocrats murmur and tremble, and some bigots sigh and pray; but there, as well as here, the rights of man and the religion of Nature will soon triumph, and crush the monster both of religious and political superstition. He does not hesitate to affirm that an able minister from

France, in whom the English patriots could confide, would direct their ardour and make the cause of the friends of liberty of both countries a common and inseparable one. He predicts that they then will soon send their George to fraternise with our Louis; that the tricoloured flag will predominate at the palace of St. James as effectually as at that of the Tuileries, and that Republicans will fraternise equally in both.

"Brissot brought forward a proposal concerning me, which, if acceded to, will oblige me to go over to England. Many things are, however, to be previously considered and arranged; and as I intend to pass all the evening of the day after to-morrow with you, I shall then be more explicit on this subject, and listen with pleasure to your opinion and counsel."

Notwithstanding the reciprocal hatred, the great differences of opinions, the mutual jealousies, and the opposite pursuits of the several rebellious factions in France, they all agreed in considering it absolutely necessary for the success of their plan of a universal revolution, previously to involve Great Britain and Ireland in the same anarchy and subversion of order which, during three years, had made France so wretched. Supposing the national character of British subjects as fickle and vicious, and the individual characters of British revolutionists as audacious and

depraved as their own, they did not expect to meet with any disappointment in their designs. They had entirely forgotten the difference between the talents, virtue and patriotism of British ministers, contrasted with those treacherous, ignorant or weak counsellors who had prepared or permitted the ruin of France. The speeches of some members of the English Opposition, the declamations of reformers at clubs, and the libels of Paine and of other seditious and unworthy Britons, encouraged them in this notion. The factious of this country were therefore applauded and flattered by all parties in France, by the Orleanists, by the Constitutionalists, by the Brissotins, by the Jacobins and by the Cordeliers, each expecting to find in this country a revolutionary ally in their cause, revolutionary defenders of their principles, and, above all, revolutionary imitators of their revolutionary enormities. They hoped to see here, as in France, palaces reduced to ashes, the clergy degraded and beggared, and men of property plundered, proscribed and murdered. Here, as well as there, they were certain of seeing every bludgeon transformed into a sceptre, and every *sans-culotte* at the same time an accuser, judge and executioner; to hear of philosophers proclaiming the rights of man on the reeking ruins of temples, and of patriots

preaching fraternity under the blood-stained lamp-posts of the sovereign people. In this hope, and in these expectations, they were not a little emboldened by Petion's report of his reception in this country. Two classes of men here formed his exclusive society. One consisted of ambitious, unruly and scheming partisans, who envied the rank and power of the great and eminent; the other of numerous needy adventurers, destitute of character and fortune, who from their shops, garrets and night-cellars sent out malice, calumny and plots, and who flattered themselves with the hope of reaping a golden harvest from the property of the wealthy and the profits which industry had bestowed on the labours of the diligent, quiet, honest and loyal. The professions and conversations of these unprincipled villains Petion concluded were the predominant sentiments of the British nation, and his erroneous conclusions were believed by the whole horde of French rebels as the criterion of the public spirit of Britons. Hence the many impolitic and audacious insults, both of the Legislative Assembly and of the National Convention, who, while expressing a desire of continuing in peace with Great Britain, applauded and permitted repeated acts of aggression against her Sovereign and her Constitution. Hence, when an

obscure party of Englishmen, who met at a public-house in Frith Street, Soho, and called themselves a Constitutional Society of Whigs, presented a foolish address to Louis XVI. and the National Assembly, promising to risk their lives and fortunes in defence of France against any despotic powers which might attempt to enchain the nation, the Legislature received this proposal "to wage war without the consent of our Government," with loud applause, and honourable mention in the *procès-verbal*, and communicated it to the King by a deputation. A written answer was returned by the President, declaring the treaty inviolate by *virtue*, simple as *truth*, essential as *reason*, and complimenting these obscure addresses as the *soundest part of the nation*.[1] Hence the National Convention afterwards declared that the French nation would grant fraternity and aid to every person *willing* to recover their liberty, and ordered their military commanders to give assistance to all such people, and defend those who might have been oppressed in the cause of liberty. This general proclamation in favour of rebellion passed by acclamation, and, being ordered to be translated into all languages, was

1 See the Address in *Debrett's State Papers;* in *Rivington's Annual Register*, 1791 · and in *Bertrand's Annals*, vol. ix., p. 49.

particularly addressed to the factious and disaffected in this country.

During the remaining part of the autumn of 1791, Talleyrand continued secretly to influence the King's determinations and to betray the confidence of his Prince to the Orleans and Republican factions. From his correspondence, it is evident that he entered into the views and subscribed to the opinions of their chiefs, Orleans and Brissot, that foreign war alone could prevent a civil one, and that hostilities would preserve and extend, and a long peace destroy, the Revolution and its promoters, together with their plans and prospects. Under the disguise of candour and concord, he, in consequence, did everything at Court to mislead and to embroil the nation, and to reduce Louis XVI. to the necessity of provoking or declaring a war contrary to his wishes, inclination and interest. The negotiations with the Emperor of Germany and with several Princes of the Empire were carried on during the winter in such a manner that, in the ensuing spring, revolutionary armies could take the field against neighbours, unsuspicious, and trusting to treaties, and, therefore, but ill-prepared for defence, and totally incapable of attack. Confiding in, because acquainted with, the sincerity and desire of Louis XVI. to avoid a rupture and to preserve

the tranquillity of Europe, other States considered his pacific professions and assurances as their security against all surprise. From the character of the persons who had intruded themselves upon the King, and into his councils, they ought, however, to have known that this ill-fated Prince would either be obliged to sign their deceitful despatches, or fall a victim to an unavailing refusal or resistance. In either case his personal and Royal virtues could not be supposed sufficient guarantees for these public and political transactions, into which he was forced by threats, seduced by sophistry, or engaged by treachery. It should also be remembered that France herself, if ruled by men of prudence and humanity, would have remained quiet; her finances suffering from the same confusion and anarchy that had destroyed discipline and subordination among her legions.

Talleyrand wrote to his *bonne amie*, under date the 10th of January, 1792:

"Narbonne, the War Minister, called on me yesterday, and was the cause of my not seeing you, as he remained with me till past eleven o'clock last night. He gave me a deplorable account of the discipline of our troops, and of the situation of our fortresses, arsenals and magazines,

very different from that laid before the King and the Assembly on his return from the visit to our frontiers. He is totally against a war to be carried on in the usual manner, but flatters himself with great success from a sudden excursion into the defenceless Austrian and German territories by a numerous body of our National Guards, as well as troops of the line. He supposes that our revolutionary propagators, and our manifestoes in favour of liberty, have procured us adherents everywhere; that revolutions will march with our armies and encompass us with allies wherever we advance.

"The poor Louis has no idea of our warlike dispositions. Even this morning he told me that he still hoped that Providence would enable him to prevent the addition of war to the other scourges of our days, and this was the object of his fervent prayers. He mentioned, as a certainty, that the Emperor of Germany did not intend to trouble the tranquillity of Europe. This Sovereign has at last, upon Noailles'[1] repeated demands, sent counter-orders to the regiments from Bohemia and Tyrol intended to reinforce his troops in Brabant, Hainault and Flanders. I was asked to write something in the shape of an address to the people, to quiet their apprehensions

1 The French Ambassador at Vienna.

from the emigrants and from the German princes. This I promised to have inserted in the *Journal de Paris*. It would be curious enough if my address met with the same favourable reception from their adversaries as my speculations on the probable advantages of an immediate war—which I read to you last week before inserting them in the *Chronique de Paris*—obtained from our patriots. I shall do as well as I can in this business; but to escape mistrust and defy treason, I shall inform the Mayor of the whole, and tell him that, to avoid suspicion at Court, I could not help accepting this disagreeable task. In some few days I hope to have Chauvelin appointed to the Embassy, under my guidance and inspection. As he will certainly visit you this day, inform him of it, and of the contents of this letter except what regards Narbonne's *indiscreet* communication."

On the 14th of the same month he wrote a letter, on a very different subject, to the same lady, which shows that, notwithstanding the occupation which his triple perfidy against the King, the Duke of Orleans and the Republicans, furnished him, he found leisure enough to engage in intrigues with women.

"It is true," says he, "that you have been well

served by your spies. Three weeks ago, at Madame Staël's, I met 'La Belle Sotte,' as you call her. She was pleased with my conversation, and I admired her as I should do Venus of Medicis, or any other inanimate *chef d'œuvre*. If she mistook my surprise at seeing so much imbecility covered with so highly finished an *etui*, for an expression of another kind, so much the worse for her. She invited me to breakfast with her, and I have certainly done so, as you say, four times, and that *tête-à-tête*. So far your information is correct; but when you surmise that she was with me the two nights that I pretended to be engaged at the Palais Royal, or at the Mayor's, either your own lively imagination has imposed on you, or your spy has robbed you of his wages. She has never been in my apartments after dark, and I am never with her but in the forenoon. As to her sister, I knew her before I had the happiness of your acquaintance. Without your claims of friendship and affection, she has more pretensions than you, and plagues me with her jealousy and suspicions in a most unaccountable and troublesome manner. She has given up to her husband my former correspondence with her, and interrupted my last *tête-à-tête* with her sister by the unseasonable introduction of

1 The residence of the Duke of Orleans.

her brother-in-law. This foolish fellow does honour to the horned brotherhood, and to his province. A true gasconader, he spoke of nothing but swords and pistols—of separation or divorce. As his dear *moitié* viewed everything in a serious or rather tragical light, threatening to poison herself, her husband and even me if she was not permitted to continue our intimacy, I, without hesitation, made my retreat, promising her husband to visit her no more. She has written to me since, but, according to agreement, I sent her letter unopened to her husband, who has obliged her to accompany him to his estate on the banks of the Garonne. The report of her having robbed her husband to pay the £5,000 I lost in gaming at the Baroness's is the invention of some envious, or malicious, rival or enemy. I paid this debt the next day with assignats, of which you (from whom I conceal nothing of my political or financial affairs) shall easily be convinced. Such is the historical and faithful account of the beginning, progress, and fall of my empire in the Chaussé d'Autin. As to her fury of a sister, I have forbid her my house.

"You see, therefore, that this *scandalous* intrigue has neither disgraced me as a lover, nor dishonoured me as a gentleman. As a *minister of peace*, I am not

permitted to carry arms, and none but cowards attack persons disarmed by accident, or by their station. After this frank explanation, I hope that your door is no longer shut, and that you are at home when I call. Remember our Charles, and accept of him as a mediator for past, a pacificator for present, and a guarantee against future infidelity. In the burning of my letters you have only done what I have repeatedly desired you. I never doubted that you would remain an affectionate and sincere friend, though you might cease to be the tender and complaisant mistress. But it shall never more be my fault if those two names do not continue inseparable for life. To-morrow night I *shall* and *will* be with you. Embrace our dear boy."

The place of a French Ambassador in England had been vacant since the death of the Marquis de la Lucerne, in the summer of 1791, but the late Secretary of the Embassy, M. de Barthelemy, acted as a *chargé d'affaires*. Although he had sworn fidelity to the late Constitution, his known moderation was, however, much against his continuance in that capacity in this country, where the Jacobins wanted diplomatic agents rather to plot and conspire than to negotiate or pacify. He received, therefore, as a kind of assistant, or rather a spy on his actions, an

apostate abbé, Noel, who had for some time been a Jacobin emissary in Holland, an unprincipled atheist and an audacious rebel, at once crafty and active in his intrigues. Here he soon became intimate with all the factions, directed their manœuvres, and by promises and bribes kept up their spirit of sedition. But as his connections were only among the lower classes of revolutionists, a gentleman was requisite, who, from his birth as well as from his public character, could claim admittance into superior society, to hear the opinions and note the actions of persons of property, eminence and rank. Talleyrand was by most parties in France considered as a fit subject for the office of a privileged conspirator in Great Britain. His talents were known, his principles avowed, and both were approved among his associates. He had just added a fresh sprig to his literary and political laurels by his fabrication of a pretended answer of the Grand Vizier to the British Ambassador at Constantinople, concerning the offer made by England to adjust, as a mediator, the differences between Turkey and Russia. This paper, in its time, made a great noise, and created no favourable opinion of our Administration, of which the factious took advantage to publish the most infamous insinuations against our national

honour and dignity. They proclaimed it as authentic, though justly and officially disowned by our ministers. This singular note-verbal was as follows:[1]

"The Grand Signor wars for himself, and for himself makes peace. He can trust his own slaves, servants and subjects; he knows their faith, has experienced their virtue, and can rely upon their fidelity—a virtue long since banished your corner of Europe. If all other Christians tell truth, no reliance is to be had on England; she buys and sells all mankind. The Ottomans have no connection with your King nor your country. We never sought for your advice, your interference or friendship. We have no minister, no agency, no correspondence with you. For what reason do ye offer, then, to mediate for us with Russia? Why seek ye to serve an empire of infidels, as ye call us Mussulmans? We want not your friendship, aid or mediation. Your Vizier, of whom you speak so highly, must have some project of deception in view, some oppressive scheme to amuse your nation, whom we are told are

1 See *La Faction d'Orléans Démasquée*, pp. 40-41. In the note it is said that Talleyrand boasted to Barnave of having composed this fabrication in fifty minutes, in the presence of Baron de Grimen, the late Russian *chargé d'affaires* at Paris. It is added that Catherine II. rewarded him afterwards for his labours with a gold snuff-box set with diamonds, worth 1,000 louis d'or.

credulous, servile, and adorers only of money. Avarice, if we are well informed, is your chief characteristic. You would sell and buy your God; money is your deity; and commerce is everything with your ministry and with your nation. Come ye, then, to sell us to Russia? No, let us bargain for ourselves. When fate has spun out the thread of our good fortune, we must yield. What has been decreed by God and the Prophet of men must and will come to pass. We Ottomans know no finesse. Duplicity and cunning are your Christian morals. We are not ashamed to be honest, downright, plain and faithful in our State maxims. If we fail in war, we submit to the will of Heaven, decreed from the beginning. We have long lived in splendour, the first Power on earth; and we glory in having triumphed for ages over Christian infidelity and depravity, mixed with all sorts of vice and hypocrisy. We adore the God of Nature, and believe in Mahomet. You neither believe in the God you pretend to worship, nor in His Son, whom you call both your God and your Prophet. What reliance can there be placed on so sacrilegious a race? You banish truth as you do virtue from all your conduct and actions with each other. Read the catalogue of the complaints, manifestoes, declarations and remonstrances

of all the Christian kings, monarchs and emperors who have lived and warred with each other; you find them all equally blasphemous, equally perfidious, equally cruel, equally unjust and faithless to their engagements. Did the Turk ever forfeit his promise, word or honour? Never! Did ever a Christian Power keep an engagement but while it suited his own avarice or ambition? No! How then do you think we are to trust you, a nation, at this moment —if we are told truth—ruled by a perfidious Administration, without one grain of virtue to guide the machine of State? The Grand Signor has no public intercourse with your Court; he wants none, he wishes for none. If you wish to remain here, either as a spy, or, as you term yourself, an Ambassador from your Court, you may live with those of other Christian nations while you demean yourself with propriety; but we want neither your aid by sea or land, nor your counsels or mediation. I have no order to thank you for your offer, because it is by the Divan deemed officious; nor have I any command to thank you for the offer of your naval assistance, because it is what the Porte never dreamed of admitting into our seas. What you have to do with Russia we neither know nor care; our concerns with that Court we mean to finish as suits ourselves and the maxim of our laws

and State policy. If you are not the most profligate Christian nation, as you are said to be, you are, undoubtedly, the foremost in presumption and effrontery, in offering to bring such a power as Russia to terms, such as you and some other trivial Christians united fancy yourselves equal to command. We know better; and therefore this effrontery of yours amounts rather to audacity and to an imbecile dictation, which must render your councils at home mean and contemptible and your advice abroad unworthy of wisdom or attention from any Power, much less the regard of the Porte, which on all occasions wherein its ministers have listened to you has experienced evil, either in your designs or from your ignorance. His Sublime Highness cannot, therefore, be too much upon his guard against the attempts and presumption of a nation so perfidious to the interest of its subjects. But it is the usual way of Christian princes to sell or cede over their subjects to each other for money. Every peace made among you, as we are informed, is made favourable to the king that bribes most. The Ottoman Ministry have too often and too long given ear to European counsels, and as often as they did so they either were betrayed, sold or deceived. Away, then, with your interference for the Porte with Russia! It has

been your aim to embroil all mankind, and afterwards to profit by your perfidy. We ask not, want not, and desire not your commerce, because our merchants have been sacrificed to your double dealings. You have no religion but gain. Avarice is your only God; and the Christian faith you profess is but a mask for your hypocrisy. We will hear no more from you, therefore you are commanded to make no reply." [1]

Notwithstanding the approbation this performance procured him among his associates, the Constitution presented an insurmountable obstacle against his employment in a public character. It has already been seen by his letters that, at the proposal of Brissot, he had for some months been intriguing to procure Chauvelin the appointment of Ambassador to the Cabinet of St. James's, and to accompany him as an adviser, or, what was the same, to be the real diplomatic agent, while Chauvelin was only a nominal one. But by some means or other, Louis XVI. had discovered that the latter had repaid his benefactions

1 This curious paper was even read by a member of the Opposition in the House of Commons, on the 29th of February, 1792, in support of his assertion that, so far from having gratified our Ottoman friends with our efforts of mediation, they regarded us with contempt and abhorrence! Since the fabricator is now known, this assertion is at least left unsupported.

with the basest ingratitude, and was, in fact, the dishonourable spy of the Republicans at his Court. This caused some delay before the King would nominate him a representative to the King of Great Britain. Talleyrand writes on this head to his friend on the 2nd of March:

"The patriots are betrayed as well as the aristocrats. I had to-day a long private conversation with the King, during which I pressed him closely to fulfil his promise in choosing Chauvelin for the diplomatic post vacant in England. After a silence of ten minutes, he asked, with some hesitation, 'Do you know the man you recommend, and can you answer for his fidelity?' Upon my declaration in the affirmative, he said, sighing, and with tears in his eyes: 'You are as much mistaken in him as I have been. He is the most undutiful, and the most ungrateful of men. He has long since been sold to my enemies, and has taken advantage of my confidence in him to injure me and those who are dear to me.' Expressing my surprise at such an assertion, and throwing out some doubts as to the veracity of the information he had received, he interrupted me, saying, 'I wish to God that I was misinformed! The perfidy of this man makes me almost detest my species and nearly mistrust my own shade. But, unfortunately,

I have convincing proofs of his unworthiness.' He then related several circumstances, with which I was previously well acquainted, and so are you, communicated and even exaggerated by Chauvelin in his report to the Mayor. I then changed my language, and insinuated that, if such was the case, his presence at Court must be intolerable; but since it would be dangerous to disgrace or expose him publicly, policy required to have him removed, as if nothing had been discovered. This could best be done by advancing him to a distant place, where I should take care of and even answer for his demeanour, and where, if he did no good, I could prevent him from doing mischief. This assertion and observation made great impression on Louis XVI., who took my hand, with a frankness and goodness that made me really feel for his deplorable situation and for the cruel necessity of sacrificing so good a Prince for the welfare and liberty of the nation, saying, 'Well, if you will promise me never to lose sight of his transactions, he shall be my minister in England, under your guidance and responsibility. Your salary shall at least be equal to his; and should I live till the term expires, when you can accept of an appointment from me, you may depend upon succeeding him. You may acquaint Chauvelin with his nomination, but

that it must be kept secret until we see the turn affairs take with the Emperor, and with the German princes, whether we are to have peace or war on the Continent.' I was not much at my ease during this conversation, apprehensive lest the spy that had informed against Chauvelin had also denounced me. I have since seen Petion, and communicated to him what I had heard. He suspects Danton; but we have agreed to let Chauvelin remain ignorant of our discovery, for fear that this coward may, from real weakness or pretended repentance, in his turn be tempted to regain his lost favour and reputation by deserting us, and disclosing all he knows, and more than he knows. Should he visit you before he calls on me, you may tell him the certainty of his promotion; but be careful not to throw out any hint concerning the other part of the contents of this letter, which, when you have read, throw into the fire immediately. I expect you and your husband to dine with me to-morrow, and our Charles is to be of the party, as Dusseaux has promised to call in the afternoon and give his opinion concerning his deafness."

Thus the unfortunate Louis XVI., encompassed by perfidy, disclosed to one traitor the treachery of another, and made the most criminal and artful of the two his confidant and counsellor. If the sim-

plicity of this Royal martyr deserves pity, abhorrence and detestation are the only sentiments inspired by the part which Talleyrand acted. In reading it, all just and impartial men will be convinced that the infamous assassins of the National Convention, though they condemned their virtuous Sovereign, were not his only and exclusive murderers. Many members of the Constituent Assembly merit equally to be stigmatised as regicides, and the blood of innocence calls as much for vengeance on their heads as on those of the other rebels who shed it on the scaffold.

About this time the King was forced to select a new Cabinet from among those who had been his greatest enemies, and formed what is called the Jacobin Administration. Talleyrand, the La Methes, Barnave, and other secret counsellors in whom His Majesty trusted, were, therefore, more consulted than ever; but as they were suspected by the Jacobins, the night was the only time when they dared show themselves at the Tuileries. Notwithstanding this precaution, however, both their presence in the palace, and frequently the very subject of their deliberations, were mentioned in the public prints. This perfidious publicity Louis XVI. ascribed to the indiscretion of inferior persons about his Court, though, in fact, it originated from Talleyrand, who

every morning either saw Petion, or sent him regular reports of what was discussed. Every means, therefore, employed secretly by the King to avoid a rupture with the Emperor and the Empire were communicated to and counteracted by his Jacobin ministers, who breathed nothing but hostilities, and employed all their efforts in rendering an accommodation or explanation impossible; and on the 20th of March, war was declared against Francis II. as King of Hungary and Bohemia, not having yet succeeded his father, Leopold II., as chief of the German Empire.

At the period when France was thus eager to rush into war without a motive, anarchy prevailed in every direction, and no class had sufficient magnanimity to set the example, or sufficient authority to enforce a better rule and system. The enemies of the King and Queen had propagated such a series of fictions respecting their principles and conduct, that no explanation or evidence of their good intentions could impress on the public a belief of their inclination to regulate their conduct by the Constitution. They were known to be deeply injured, and it was perceived that they were not sufficiently degraded tamely to endure offensive familiarity and nauseous insolence. It was, therefore, inferred that

implacable revenge and treacherous projects must occupy their thoughts. These suppositions and these calumnies continually animated the fury of the populace. Execrations of the King and Queen were not confined to select parties or even to promiscuous meetings; but their very residence was chosen as the fittest spot for the utterance of the grossest abuse, and for insulting those who retained appearances of respect for the King and his family. These atrocities were feelingly described by the Queen in conversation with Dumourier: "I am quite disconsolate," she said; "I dare no longer approach the windows that look into the garden. Yesterday evening, when I appeared at that opposite to the court to breathe a little fresh air, a cannoneer of the National Guard seized the opportunity to overwhelm me with gross insults, adding, by way of conclusion, '*What pleasure it would give me to have your head stuck on the point of my bayonet!*' In this frightful garden you see in one place a man mounted on a chair and reading the most horrible calumnies against us in a loud tone of voice; in another you perceive an officer or an abbé dragged towards a basin of water, insulted, and fainting from blows and wounds; and during all this some play at football or walk about without the least concern. What a habitation! what a people!"

The members of the National Assembly, at the same time, disgraced their sittings by outrageous debates, unmanly reproaches and even manual defiances. Unused to the regulations of superior life, they knew of no restraining principle but force. But these tumultuous senators were themselves under the control of the galleries. For, as they aimed only at popular acclamation, without any expectation of respect, they were obliged to submit, without resistance, to all the caprices of the mob, who, without ceremony or restraint, overawed, controlled or interrupted their proceedings. The clubs and the rabble, knowing themselves to be the sources of popularity and power, and dignified by abject flatterers with the absurd title of the sovereign people, knew no bounds to their insolence, and treated with open contempt every effort of restraining them. They were submissive only to the mandates of a few factious leaders, who, by the distribution of money and liquor, knew how to mould, impel and govern them. The payment of taxes was entirely superseded; convoys of grain and specie, destined for the supply of distant parts, were stopped and plundered to satisfy the exigencies or avarice of those who had been formerly relieved by the bounty of the great. The freedom of worship was everywhere violated, and

highwaymen and house-breakers, under the cloak of patriots, crowded the high-roads and plundered the persons and houses of the inoffensive or wealthy, many of whom they afterwards murdered, hung to the lamp-post, or quartered, under the pretence that they were aristocrats. All cash had disappeared, and the assignats, or Government securities, issued on the credit of the lands of the Church, already circulated at a loss of forty per cent. Business stagnated, both for want of capital, safety and encouragement. Every reasoning man, therefore, who speculated on the state of France was convinced that nothing less than madness could impel a declaration of war amid domestic weakness, discredit and disorder.

The issue of the first engagement of the revolutionary armies seemed to confirm the justness of their opinions; they did not perceive the deeply combined plans of Talleyrand, Petion, Brissot, and other demagogues. To all these the Constitution was odious, because it retained a King, whom they had resolved at least to depose, if not to annihilate his authority. But they were too prudent to let their hatred of the Constitution appear in their acts. That absurd farrago, obtained at the expense of so much struggling and so many sacrifices, was exhibited to the people as a great acquisition, in rescuing liberty from the hands of pre-

tended despotism. A party, neither strong nor respectable, composed of those who had been the associates of the chief framers of the Constitution, were its known defenders; and the Legislature found it necessary to swear to its maintenance till common sense was disgusted with their ridiculously repeated adjurations. The King, they knew, had made the Constitution his study, and the rule of his practice. This patriotic Prince had even learnt it by heart, and applied it to the regulation of all his actions; yet the Republicans did not hesitate to raise clamours against every act of the Sovereign which was directed by that code. His nomination of ministers, his conduct with respect to the declaration of war, his exercise of the power commonly called the *veto*—all these were made constant topics of public abuse, calumny and libels. The defences of ministers, though perfectly justified by the Constitution, were not more favourably received by the Assembly; but it was artfully contrived to praise and swear to defend this ridiculous idol, while every objection to its existence was studiously accumulated, and the people impelled to actions and resolutions tending to its inevitable destruction. Though Talleyrand and most other rebels of any talents had shared bountifully of the King's purse, the Civil List was

also regarded with peculiar malevolence. The *great nation* had learnt maxims of meanness by rote, and exalted avarice into a virtue. Exclamations against the enormous revenue reserved to the Crown were always sure of a good reception, especially when mingled with the endeavours of those who had not yet been bribed to prove that liberty was betrayed by individuals already bribed out of this envied Civil List.

Such was the situation of France, and such were the plans of the parties that desolated the kingdom when, on the 1st of May, Louis XVI. publicly appointed Chauvelin his minister in this country, and Talleyrand his assistant. He wrote on that occasion the following letter to our beloved Sovereign, the last His Majesty received from this amiable Prince:

CONFIDENTIAL LETTER FROM THE KING OF THE FRENCH TO THE KING OF ENGLAND.

PARIS, *May 1st*, 1792.

SIR, MY BROTHER,—I send this letter by M. Chauvelin, whom I have appointed my Minister Plenipotentiary at Your Majesty's Court. I embrace this opportunity to express to Your Majesty how sensible I am of all the public marks of affection you have given me. I thank you for not having become a party to the plans concerted against France by certain Powers. From this, I see that you have formed a better judgment of my true interests, and a more correct opinion of the state of France. Between our two countries new connections

ought to take place. I think I see the remains of that rivalship which has done so much mischief to both wearing daily away. It becomes two Kings who have distinguished their reigns by a constant desire to promote the happiness of their people, to unite themselves by such ties as will appear to be durable, in proportion as the two nations shall have clearer views of their own interests. I have every reason to be satisfied with your Majesty's Ambassador at my Court. If I do not give the same rank to the minister whom I have sent to you, you will, nevertheless, perceive that, by *associating in the mission with him M. de Talleyrand*, who, by the letter of the Constitution, can sustain no public character, I consider the success of the alliance, in which I wish you to concur with as much zeal as I do, as of the highest importance. I consider it as necessary *to the stability of the respective Constitutions*, and *to the internal tranquillity* of our two kingdoms; and I will add, that our union ought to command peace to Europe.

I am, your good Brother,

(Signed) Louis.[2]

Talleyrand, in a letter to his mistress of the 22nd of May, containing the copy of the above, writes that "it was composed by him, and copied, without any change or remark, by the King, who had now *an unbounded confidence in his fidelity*." "I am now so busy," continues he, "with my preparations, and in meditating on my several and opposite instructions, from the Tuileries,[3] from the Palais Royal,[3] and from

1 See *La Correspondence d'Infames Emigrés, &c.*, vol. iv., p. 66. In a note it is said that its authenticity is verified by Dumourier, as the then Minister of the Foreign Department.

2 The King.

3 The Duke of Orleans.

La Mairie,[1] that I have only time to pass some few hours with you this evening, when I shall give you two different sorts of ciphers for your use in writing to me, and those different directions for continuing with safety and without interruption our mutual correspondence; therefore, take care to be at home and alone to-night, and give your orders so that nobody interrupts our *tête-à-tête*. Send with the bearer of this the £20,000 in assignats I deposited with you, and if you know any capitalists you desire to oblige, tell them that I shall shortly be able to place their money to the greatest advantage, but they must determine before the day after to-morrow, as I then intend to set out for England."

A French author,[2] on this letter, says that, according to notes in the possession of the Committee of Public Safety, the private instructions from the King were such as might be expected from this undesigning Sovereign. In proposing an alliance with England, Talleyrand and Chauvelin were ordered "not to listen to any proposals, accept of any plan,

1 Petion.

2 See *La Faction d'Orléans Démasquée, &c.*, p. 45 *et seq.* *Le Diable Boiteux Révolutionnaire*, pp. 24-25, says that Talleyrand, in going to England, had even offered his services to the anarchists Danton, Marat and Robespierre, but, after some conferences, they were not accepted.

or enter into any plots of the factious or seditious in Great Britain that could there bring about those scenes of horror produced by the Revolution in France. They were to decline all communication concerning the affairs of State, except with persons in official situations. Even if overtures should be made by any members of the Opposition, they should prudently, and without giving offence, signify that without further orders from France they were not prepared or permitted to hear any suggestions unsanctioned by or offensive to the British Administration. They had a credit for £16,000, to pay the salaries due to the secret agents employed by the late French Ambassador, and for other occasional and unavoidable occurrences. They could engage no new agents at any higher salary than £250, without first obtaining the permission of the Minister of the Foreign Department. The strictest economy was enjoined."

The private and secret instructions of the Duke of Orleans, written by La Clos, recommended to Talleyrand "to maintain a good understanding with the P—— of ——, and the members of the Opposition, and of the Whig Club; to follow their advice, and to act according to their intimations and plans. He was to insinuate to them the probability of the

Duke being declared a Regent, or even proclaimed a constitutional King of the French, in consequence of the incapacity or perfidy of Louis XVI. In that event, the Duke promised to assist them with all his political influence, military forces, or pecuniary resources, to bring about a change in the English Administration or Constitution, congenial with, and favourable to their wishes, wants and ambition. Should he find them reluctant and mistrustful, he was, with the assistance of his inferior agents, to address himself to the popular leaders of the different clubs and societies; inform them that the Duke would accept of no other place in the French Commonwealth than that of an elective President, as in America; and that they might depend upon his assistance to establish a republic in England, formed, as in France, upon liberty and equality. The Duke gave him a credit for £25,000, to be used according to his own discretion. He was desired to distribute money among the popular favourites, for the purpose of celebrating with splendour the glorious epochs of the French Revolution and other patriotic feasts. He was to pay the expenses of the journeys in England, or voyages to France, incurred by those men, or their agents, for the purpose of propagation, for information, or from policy."

Petion's instructions for Talleyrand were composed by Brissot and Roland. "He was, from these *sans-culottes*, provided with a credit of £125,000 on the Treasurer of the Committee of Insurrection, a member of the Financial Committee of the National Assembly. This money he was to employ in a manner best suited to the views and attempts of the English patriots, either in providing depôts of arms and ammunition, or in rewarding authors for composing works, sermons, addresses, pamphlets, speeches, songs, plays, ballads, &c., in favour of liberty and equality. He was to pay all the expenses of the popular leaders at their meetings, in taverns, in clubs or in committees, and what they laid out for their travelling agents, their correspondents, &c. He was to encourage the British patriots to enter into a subscription for the expenses which the war of liberty caused the French patriots in their resistance against despotism, and on that account advance the principal ones a certain sum, *to be subscribed in their own names*, as an example for others. The most popular men, who with patriotism possessed talents and *probity*, he was to send over to Paris before the 14th of July (1792), to deliberate in the united Gallo-Britannic Convention with the French, as the representatives of the English, Scotch and Irish Republics, on the best

means to crush everywhere the triple aristocracy of the Nobility, Clergy and the Capitalists, and to find out the safest and most expeditious way to plant the tree of liberty throughout the universe and to erect the cap of equality upon the ruin of thrones and altars! He was ordered to reward with liberality all agents in the British navy and army who preached the heavenly doctrine of the Rights of Man and the sacred tenets of insurrection. He was to spare no expense in having translated and circulated in all quarters, barracks and *corps de gardes*, on board all men-of-war, and in houses of rendezvous, copies of those popular addresses and songs that in 1789 electrified the military in France. He should try to find out and to instruct some female patriots or enthusiasts who, from their personal charms, amiable zeal or natural capacity, could possibly make the greatest impression among the soldiers and sailors. He was to employ them constantly, and always to pay them liberally, either as secret propagators, literary pedlars, ballad singers, or under any other suitable, unsuspected and useful avocation. Even those most distinguished he might establish in purchasing for them those public-houses chiefly resorted to by the military, not only in London, but in all seaports or towns where the garrisons were numerous. Besides the

Argus, already in the service and pay of the French patriots, he was to purchase or set up other newspapers in London, Edinburgh, Dublin, Birmingham, Sheffield, Manchester, Glasgow, Nottingham, Leeds, Norwich, and other manufacturing towns or populous cities. These papers might, to a certain extent, and when containing anything particularly striking, be distributed gratis among the lower classes and in public-houses frequented by them. These papers are instructed to palliate the mistaken or exaggerated zeal of some patriots, and to exculpate the bloody scenes of well-meaning but misled patriotism; they were to contradict everything published by aristocrats against liberty and the sovereignty of the people; they were particularly intended to disseminate those opinions which in France have produced such surprising events and such fortunate effects. At all times, and on all occasions, the example of France was to be held up to admiration and imitation. In this, as well as in everything else, especially if any depôts of arms and ammunition, &c., are formed, Beaumarchais would be of great utility and service. As, however, during the existence of Capet (Louis XVI.) Talleyrand was to avoid giving umbrage to the English aristocrats, he was, besides Beaumarchais, Noel,

Chaubert, Audibert and Danoux, to employ and direct in the most perilous enterprises other inferior English, Scotch or Irish agents recommended to him by the chief patriots of these countries. Should he, nevertheless, be discovered or disgraced before the great blow was struck, he might depend upon the powerful protection of the patriots in France. Should the credit he possesses be insufficient for all expenses, he was to call on those French patriots in England or Holland who, with the permission of the Republican Executive Council at Paris, had established manufactories of forged assignats in these countries, and they would remit to him good bills to any amount."[1]

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1 Some of these French patriots, after the disgrace of their principals at Paris, from forgers of assignats became staunch Royalists, and pretended to have been employed by the Bourbons and the English Ministry. Among their accomplices and Talleyrand's most active travelling agents was Achilles Charles Audibert, from Calais. This man spoke good English, and was sent with all confidential communications to all the different seditious societies in Great Britain. When in August, 1792, a convention was decreed, he went to Calais and got Thomas Paine elected a member of the French Convention, and in the next month, after being pelted at Dover, carried this rebel safe to Paris. There, in conformity to Talleyrand's orders, he joined some other patriots in the robbery of the King's Garde de Meubles. With part of this plunder he went to Hamburg in 1795, and commenced business as a merchant. In 1799, after taking in several loyal and rich houses—for the most part English—to the amount

The same author remarks: "Such were Talleyrand's adroitness and cunning that, notwithstanding his activity in England, voyages to France, and intrigues with all parties of both countries, he was not suspected or accused of any double or unfair dealings until the authority of the King had been annihilated by the Republicans, the Duke of Orleans disgraced, and his faction dissolved by them, and in their turn the Republicans had been proscribed by the Jacobins and anarchists; or when, from the destruction or impotence of his employers, and his own absence from France with their capitals, secrets and plans, he had nothing either to hope or to fear from the Reign of Terror which he, together with them, had prepared."

He had not been in England much more than a fortnight when, on the 24th of May, he wrote to his mistress, complaining both of the English democrats and aristocrats—of the former for their avarice and want of principle, and of the latter for their haughti-

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of £10,000, he made a fraudulent bankruptcy and absconded. His name, after being burnt by the hands of the common executioner, is now affixed to the pillory on the 'Change at Hamburg. This short narrative of one of Talleyrand's agents may justly be applied to many of them. In 1801 this very villain was again employed by him and sent to Canada to stir up a rebellion there. In 1793 he was one of the first foreigners ordered out of this kingdom after the Alien Bill had passed.—See *Les Intrigues de Ch. M. Talleyrand* (Neufchâtel, 1801), p. 98.

ness and want of good behaviour. He found his reception here very different indeed from what he expected from Petion's boastings and exertions. Though formerly acquainted in France with several English gentlemen of rank and property, he was, on presenting himself to them here, either received with coolness, neglect or contempt. This demeanour he ascribed to national insolence, pride or ingratitude; but it was a just and an honourable indignation against a bishop who had become an apostate, and against a nobleman who was now a rebel and an associate with the rabble.

"Either," writes he, "Petion is imposed upon, or has imposed upon me. By men of birth and eminence, the French Revolution is far from being approved, or its chief actors applauded, in England. It is not comprehended by them; they see nothing but its inevitable crimes, and forget its certain and innumerable future benefits. Was it not known to me that the English nobility and gentry are as forgetful and insolent towards foreigners visiting their country as they are presumptuous and full of impertinent pretensions to civilities when abroad, I should suppose that the part I have acted these last three years deserved the disrespect and hauteur—to say no worse—experienced by me in calling on

persons to whom I behaved very differently when in France.

"If Petion, in his brilliant account of his reception here, meant his reception among the English patriots, the society and discourses of these interested and selfish but grave and pedantic ragamuffins may please him, being nearly as elegant and amiable as those he frequented and admired at Chartres,[1] but to me they are intolerably insupportable. I am very sorry to say, but so it is, that the friends of liberty here are of the same description with most of our own. Pursued by creditors they are unable to pay, tormented by an ambition they cannot gratify, or trembling for the laws of their country which they have offended, they cover themselves, their passions, their fears and their sins with the cloak of patriotism, and speak of reducing a rank they can never approach, to dispose of a property to which they have no right, and to protect a Constitution with the ruins of which they intend to elevate and enrich themselves.

"This language, you may think, is that of an aristocrat; but, indeed, since my arrival here everything has concurred to vex, fret and perplex me.

1 Before the Revolution, Petion was a ruined pettifogging attorney of the town of Chartres.

Of fifty the most popular patriots—the oracles of newspapers, the toasts of taverns and the heroes of clubs—who have waited on me, or whom I have met elsewhere, there was not one who did not begin his conversation with relating his disinterestedness, praising his great zeal and extolling his great services in the cause of liberty, but who did not also finish by announcing his great distress, complaining of his great losses and demanding great sums of money. From what I comprehend of the reports of my subaltern agents, the spirit of avarice and corruption is very general among the inferior classes of the English patriots, either because they really are beggars, and, for want of another, have made liberty their trade, or on account of their innate and national thirst after gain, even in the noblest undertaking, or for the most generous achievements.

"As to the English ministers, they are reserved, stiff, and distant, either from fear of discovering their own ignorance or weakness, or from dreading my penetration, or disliking my principles. Of the Opposition members I have not yet seen many, and none without witness. They behave with more cordiality than ministers, and with less meanness than the patriots. I am, however, told that they are in their own opinions as consequential, vain and ambitious

as the former, and in their domestic affairs as deranged, involved and necessitous as the latter. The only consolation I have for these and other unpleasant occurrences is, that from my situation and information I am enabled to speculate in the public funds with advantage, and, at the expense of this covetous nation, enrich myself and my friends.[1] Should Petion visit you, complain much of not hearing from me. My letter to him is both short and laconic. Repeat the same complaint if anyone from the Tuileries or Palais Royal calls on you. Ask, with *nonchalance*, whether Chauvelin has written, and how he likes his place. He has finished three letters for France to-day. I am ignorant both of their contents and to whom they are addressed. Should I not, before they are sent away, discover it, in which case I shall add a postscript, you must try, with the assistance of those trusty and useful persons to whom I recommended you at my departure, to obtain the necessary intelligence. Our plenipotentiary is certainly one of the greatest fools God ever created or Nature ever produced; but asses are often mischievous, and always more malicious than lions.

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1 *Journal des Jacobins* of the 13th July, 1793, states that from May to December, 1792, Talleyrand gained by stock-jobbing in England £82,000.

"P.S.—I have just intercepted the letters, and read them. They were addressed to Roland, La Porte and Robespierre. Ah, traitor! he, too, has his secret instructions, and is audacious enough to prefer complaints against me for my want of complaisance and generosity towards the patriots, and of candour towards him. But patience, and, above all, discretion." [1]

This interesting letter requires little or no commentary. It shows that, without any public or privileged character, Talleyrand here audaciously violated not only the laws of nations but those of hospitality, and that, in betraying to rebels the confidence of the King of France, he conspired here with traitors against the throne of the King of Great Britain. This is the man who, in an official situation, has lately dared to advise his tyrant Bonaparte to accuse a Drake, and to seize a Rumbold,

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1 *La Correspondence d'Infames Emigrés*, vol. iv., p. 84 *et seq.* By English *patriots* Talleyrand means the seditious leaders or members of the Corresponding and other revolutionary societies. To call a man in France a patriot or philosopher, is now synonymous with calling him a robber, a murderer and an atheist! Every brigand since the Revolution has usurped in France the name of a patriot or philosopher. An age must pass away before either of the above words can resume there its pristine honour.

as violators of the laws of nations! This is the grand vizier of a Corsican sultan who has lately signed an insolent firman pronouncing a political interdiction and revolutionary proscription against all British political agents on the Continent, under the supposition that they corresponded with some loyal and dutiful subjects in France who are desirous to restore to the Bourbons their throne, Frenchmen their honour, rights and liberty, and the world its long-lost tranquillity, by removing its scourge—a foreign usurper.

The horrors of the situation of Louis XVI. and the Royal Family increased about this period daily, and almost hourly. Their sufferings were not confined to insults from the savage licentiousness of the multitude: they were even hindered in their own apartments from receiving those who would have been agreeable to them, and were compelled to endure the presence of persons employed as spies on their conduct who were not even endowed with sufficient address to conceal their odious mission. Many of these insults were doubtless contrived in hopes of forcing the King again to quit the capital, and, by abdicating the crown, leave the plan of a new government to the struggle of factions and the decision of chance. The Jacobins would not in all

probability have impeded his journey, since Petion and Manuel frequently remonstrated with him on the dangers he incurred by remaining, and proffered means of escape. But Louis had studied the Constitution with the honest view of guiding himself entirely by its sanctions, and could not resolve by his own act to be anything less than King of the French. Some measures were suggested, and occasionally practised by his friends, for purchasing, dividing or misleading his enemies; but these were only expedients resorted to for momentary purposes and abandoned or disclaimed after a short experiment. They were temporary barriers against a partial irruption, while the swelling tide of Jacobinism, gathering and roaring on every side, threatened the inevitable destruction of monarchy and the Constitution.

Either to assist in the new revolution which Petion and his accomplices were preparing in France, or to deliberate on the means of effecting a revolution in this country, several of the factious English, with whom, during his stay in London, he had been connected the year before, were, with their friends, invited by him to Paris, in the beginning of June, 1792, and Talleyrand had orders to advance money for the expenses of those who

demanded it. He wrote on this subject to his female friend, under date the 6th of June:

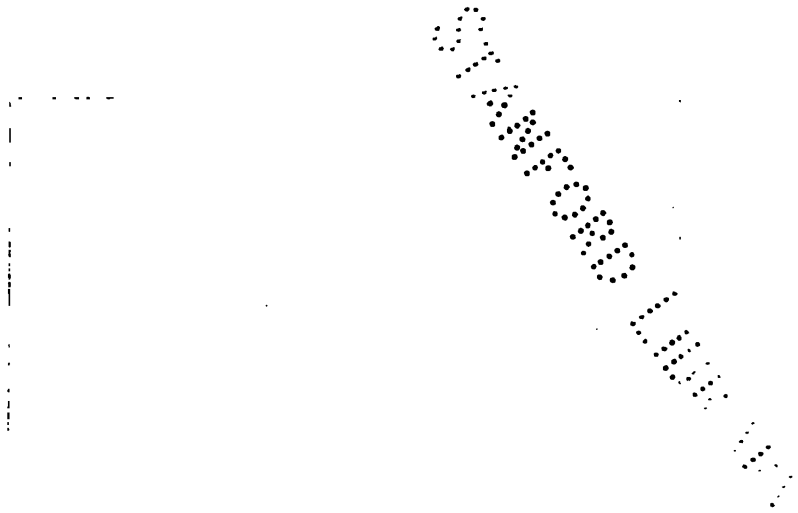
"Petion has given me a commission which is not so easy to execute as he imagines. I am to pay some of the patriots here their expenses to Paris, where they are convoked to discuss some affairs of great moment to both countries. Any person may for £5 travel in the diligence from the English to the French capital; but though I have offered them twenty guineas each, they are not contented. None will take less than one hundred guineas, and some even have the modesty to require two hundred. Most of these patriots are, however, miserable adventurers or vagabonds, accustomed chiefly to ramble on foot, or to ride in waggons, and who never before in their lives possessed ten guineas they could call their own. By attending to my duty of economising with the purse of the nation, I am well aware that I have gained their hatred, and perhaps the suspicion of the French patriots of not being hearty in their cause. My countrymen are but little acquainted with the egotism and avarice of their fellow-labourers of Great Britain. Rapacious as many of our friends of liberty have unfortunately been, they may nevertheless be considered as perfectly disinterested compared with those of this

country, where it may truly be said, 'Point d'argent, point de patriotisme.' When, after long and disgusting debates, I had been able to satisfy their demands as to travelling expenses, they insisted on being paid before they set out all sums pretended to be due to them for services already performed. Although I began to be accustomed to their exorbitant charges, these patriotic bills really went beyond my highest expectations. One asks fifty guineas for having composed a patriotic hand-bill of sixty lines; a second, one hundred guineas for having invented ten patriotic toasts; a third, one hundred and fifty guineas for having written twelve patriotic songs; a fourth, two hundred guineas for three months' expenses at the theatres to applaud patriotic sentences and airs and to hiss aristocratic expressions and 'God save the King'; and a fifth, three hundred guineas for nine patriotic speeches, which I am almost certain was at the rate of half-a-crown for each word; with hundreds of other charges equally impertinent and extravagant. Being informed, upon my refusal to satisfy these enormous demands, that these friends of liberty would make free with their travelling expenses without leaving London, I was finally obliged to submit to their patriotic impositions. I must, at the same time, do them the justice to say that they

have not entered into any combination to plunder me, or if they have, they are as faithless to each other as they are troublesome to me, because there is hardly one of them who has not warned me against the roguish character of his comrades, in such a manner that I know most of the particulars of their lives, the secret history of which would form no unfit addition to the annals of our Bicêtre,[1] or of their Newgate.

"You will, perhaps, again say that I have caught the malady of this country, and ask me why I employ such infamous men in the honourable cause of freedom. But, without spleen, I assert that their moral depravity and turpitude will no more hurt the cause of liberty in England than the vices and crimes of many Frenchmen have injured it in France. Such desperadoes are absolutely necessary, as the forlorn-hopes, in convulsions of States. It was neither Mirabeau, Orleans, La Fayette, nor myself, who, on the 14th of July, 1789, took the Bastille and cut off the head of the Governor; nor was it any of us or of our friends, who, on the 6th of October, murdered the King's *gardes de corps*, carried their heads on pikes,

1 Bicêtre, near Paris, is a prison for all persons judged incorrigibly wicked, and a mad-house for persons supposed to be incurably mad.



Forging a Prisoner's Chains at Bicetre

From a drawing by Marckl, engraved by Langlois

Approved for Release: 2022/05/12

ate their hearts, and forced the Royal Family, after witnessing these scenes, to Paris; but without these catastrophes and acts of terror, a revolution would never have taken place, and I, as well as many other *pure* patriots, should be now living in gaols, or already have expired under the gallows. As to my calling these men the chiefs or leaders of the English patriots, they are, as presidents, members, or secretaries of their secret revolutionary committees, or as speakers, subscribers, or toast-masters at their fraternal assemblies or public feasts, *the visible ones*, being mostly persons in ruined circumstances; and having nothing but lives hardly worth preserving, or already forfeited, to lose, they present themselves in the advanced guard to receive the fury of the first fire of the aristocrats; but when they have once victoriously achieved their undertakings, and the colours of liberty are erected on the ruins of the Tower of London, as well as on those of the Bastille at Paris, many *respectable* patriots, now in the rear or behind the curtain, will step forward and declare themselves the protectors and restorers of their country's freedom and of the rights of their countrymen. Everything is indeed ripe for a revolution here; but as the well-organised slavery of the English people has very much the resemblance

of genuine liberty, it requires many more different manœuvres here to bring about what the patriots have agreed to call a *reform* than were used to produce a revolution and overthrow in France. To a people of our quick and lively, amiable and great character, the impulse of a moment is sufficient to effect great changes. But the English, like the Batavians, must patiently be wound up like clock-work; but when once set agoing, they will not stop till they strike vigorously—and then the devil himself cannot arrest them from proceeding to the most sanguinary extremes, which made Voltaire acutely write that 'executioners would have been the best English historians.'

"I have, at last, ventured to give Petion my opinion of the English patriots, what may be expected from their activity here, and in what respects their presence can be useful in France; you may, therefore, inform him, when he sees you, that you had some lines from me, but that *I am already infected with the English spleen*, or that something vexes me. Ask him if he knows what it is, and beg him to acquaint you with it, that you may scold me, or send me some consolation. Should he mention the arrival of the English patriots, invite yourself to dine with them at his house, and I am

much mistaken, whether, with all their vanity, pedantry and affectation, you will not find them mere caricatures of those patriots which your imagination pictures to you as destined by Nature, education and talents to regenerate mankind. Remember, however, what I have stated before, that these patriots are merely clumsy copies, held out as butts to prevent the valuable originals from being prematurely and unnecessarily sacrificed. When any of the King's,[1] or of the Duke's,[2] friends call on you, continue to complain of not hearing from me. Enquire, with *unaffected* uneasiness, whether anything disagreeable has happened to me, or whether I or Chauvelin have written to them, and how they are satisfied with *us*. I say this because Chauvelin is now entirely subjected to my *exclusive* dictates, having discovered a part, and obliged him to give up the remainder, of his secret instructions from the Court as well as from the Jacobins. I have in my hands the greatest possible, if not the only security for the faith of a villain—*his ruin*. You may, therefore, communicate to me without danger all rumours or reports concerning us both, with your ideas of removing unfavourable stories and circulating

1 Louis XVI.

2 The Duke of Orleans.

those which are advantageous to our plans, interest and mission.

"From want of time and opportunity I have not yet been able to form any just opinion of the English ministers. That they possess abilities and honesty I begin to believe, because their enemies would otherwise expose both their ignorance and their corruption; besides, they are too well paid by their country to be rogues. I think that I have penetrated into the secrets of many members of the Opposition, and find that they only want places and pensions to be as honest and dutiful subjects as the ministers. But in all countries disappointed ambition, merciless bailiffs, empty purses, or aching stomachs are terrible incitements to declaim against Courts, to speak of reform, or to plot revolutions."

A French work, often quoted, thus describes the arrival of the English and German patriots at Paris, their acts of patriotism during their stay, and the patriotic relics they carried away with them at their departure:

"Since the Constituent Assembly had, just before the first federation in 1790, put in requisition the literary adventurers and social outlaws of every country on the globe to present themselves at its bar and congratulate it in so many different

languages on its glorious labours to restore to nations their long-lost liberty, a laudable emulation took place between the constitutional authorities and the anti-constitutional clubs which should be foremost in inviting foreign patriots to their fraternal banquets. English highwaymen, Spanish pickpockets, Italian galley slaves, and German house-breakers, after sharing the embraces of our wealthy patriots, soon made free with their plate and their pockets, and after crowding our patriotic societies, finished by crowding our gaols, our hulks and our scaffolds. These palpable errors, instead of correcting the mania of our revolutionary propagators, served only to increase it, particularly with regard to England and Germany. In June, 1792, Talleyrand imported from the latter country an Anarcharsis Cloots; from the former, numerous patriotic contraband commodities. The diligences from Calais and from Strasburg were for several weeks so completely filled with these votaries of liberty and equality that they literally groaned under the weight of their patriotic burdens. Some of them broke down in consequence, and many valuable limbs of these precious members of society were injured, and they became pensioners of the great nation before they had fought for her dearly-bought liberty. According to the registers of the municipality

at Calais, the patriotic cargo of one single packet-boat consisted of ten bankrupt merchants, two pilloried booksellers, and six pilloried printers; fifteen ex-attorneys struck off the rolls, twelve friends of liberty escaped from the hulks, nine active citizens from Botany Bay, twenty-three released inhabitants of Newgate and Bridewell, and thirteen coiners from Rag Fair, amounting, in the whole, to ninety-two citizens—brothers and friends of our legislators and clubbists. The importations from Germany were still more numerous and more select. Not a gaol from Vienna to Copenhagen, not a university from Presburgh, in Hungary, to Kehl, in Holstein, but furnished some of their philosophers as representatives to the great nation, either in citizens oppressed or ill-used by the tyrant laws of their respective countries, or in half-learned pedants or pedantic sophists who had clearly proved the uselessness, and even dangers, of all laws, human or Divine."

Some of these friends of liberty, after their arrival at Paris, were billeted on wealthy aristocrats, others on aspiring *sans-culottes*, some in the rich suburbs of St. Honoré and St. Germain, others in the poor and patriotic suburbs of St. Antoine and St. Marceau, some with the gay ladies of the Palais Royal, others with the grave magistrates of La Marais; several

chosen revolutionists, especially recommended by Talleyrand, were lodged with our grave Mayor, the honest Petion himself, at the head-quarters of insurrection, conspiracy and rebellion. All their names in a few days decorated the bloody pages of the list of Jacobins and Cordeliers. At both these clubs they were received, applauded and admired, though they could not pretend to the gift of tongues—hardly any of them understanding or speaking any other than their native language. A specimen of the degraded situation of France at that terrible period, and of the success of imposture, impudence and fanaticism, the following faithful and not exaggerated anecdote evinces: "On the 17th of June several foreign patriots of different nations dined with Danton; at six o'clock in the evening they adjourned to the Club of the Cordeliers, their spirits exhilarated with the fumes of champagne from the cellars of the Duke of Orleans. One of them, an Irishman, who had a great opinion of his eloquence and of his perfection in the French language, ascended the tribune with intent to move the immediate deposition of the King, which was then the order of the day in the National Assembly as well as at the clubs. The day was very hot and the club unusually crowded; and, as he was

decorated with a woollen cap, he perspired profusely. Being not only awkward in his manners, but disfigured in his person, he rather excited pity and disgust than laughter or curiosity. He began, however, boldly in French, 'Frères et amis!' (brothers and friends), but these were the only words that could possibly be understood by the audience, the remainder of his speech being neither French nor English, but a jargon unintelligible, most probably, even to himself. Notwithstanding this dilemma, he occupied the tribune for nearly an hour; but, as he took care to heighten his voice in exclaiming 'Liberty! liberty!' every four or five minutes, or as often as he saw the galleries were inclined to murmur, he went on, uninterrupted with anything but 'huzzas!' and 'bravoes!' When ascending the tribune, the president, the butcher Le Gendre, gave him the fraternal hug, and honourable mention was made or his speech in the *procés-verbal*. But to crown the whole, a matron in the gallery, an active female citizen who kept a brothel in the Rue du Théâtre François, publicly invited the strange citizen and his countrymen to her house. Her patriotic offer was accepted with loud acclamations; and, upon the motion of Hebert, the Club of the Cordeliers with unanimity decreed that the female citizen,

Bertrand, had deserved well of her country for her hospitality."[1]

For several days afterwards, and until the firmness of Louis XVI. on the 20th of June had disappointed their united machinations, these foreigners wandered about the streets of Paris with their red caps, instead of hats, to the amusement of the *sans-culottes* and to the scandal of the good and loyal. The principal object of their extraordinary convocation was to agree on a plan of a universal republic; and these vagabonds had the audacity to deliberate on and to settle the future governments of their respective countries, as if deputed with the general approbation and unlimited power of all the people upon earth. Previous to their departure they made some inestimable collections of revolutionary relics, which, no doubt, still decorate the dens, night-cellars or garrets of patriotic amateurs or sainted patriots. Some loaded their knapsacks with chains, keys, stones, or bricks of the

1 In a note in *La Faction d'Orléans Démasquée*, p. 57, the author says: "It would have been curious to know what reception a French patriot would meet with were he to attempt, in unintelligible English, to harangue a society of English patriots of the Whig or other clubs, at the London Tavern or at the Crown and Anchor, for an hour's time? Most probably, in less than five minutes, they would have silenced him by throwing him through the window into the street, as he deserved. Even the English patriots have more sense than ours!"

Bastille; others carried away with them branches of the first tree of liberty—the hairs of the poisoned Mirabeau and of the murdered *garde de corps* of the King. The staunchest of them bought, at a great price, and brought home with them, a part of the pickled heart of Flessiere, the provost of the merchants, and the dried ears of De Launey, the governor of the Bastille. All, even those who had no change of linen, were provided with changes of red caps and national cockades, and had been presented with the newest editions of the Rights of Man and with the new catechism of the Jacobin propaganda.[1]

Though Talleyrand had agreed to the necessity of murdering the King, he strenuously recommended that the crime should be perpetrated by the sudden stab of an individual assassin, and not by the judicial sentence of a national tribunal. He had converted to the same opinion the English patriots who went to Paris, and they, in their turn, under expectation of preventing future generations from celebrating King Louis' martyrdom in France, as this nation does King Charles's in England, gained over Petion,

1 In another note of the last-named work it is stated that "the English as well as the German patriots, as an evidence of their patriotism, travelled home the whole way from Paris with red caps on their heads, to the no small entertainment of postillions and chamber-maids."

Brissot and other Republican leaders. This regicide act could, agreeably to their views, best and safest be committed in the confusion of a popular commotion, which was therefore resolved on, and the day fixed for the 20th of June. Four days before, the workmen of the suburbs of St. Antoine and St. Marceau had announced it by a petition to the municipality requesting leave to assemble in arms, and, accoutred as they were when they took the Bastille in July, 1789, to present petitions to the Assembly and the King. This proposal was negatived as repugnant to the Constitution; but the Jacobin Club, abetted by Petion and Manuel, resolved that the petitioners should assemble in defiance of contradiction. This tumultuous rising was also the grand effort of all the factions, and was prepared with all their art and exertion. The walls were covered with placards grossly abusing the Royal Family. A public dinner was given in the Champs Elysées, where the Prussian Baron Cloots presided, and the actor Dugazon sang songs to prepare the people for the destruction of the King. Gorsas, the editor of a Jacobin journal, in the service of Brissot, and a secret agent of Talleyrand, declared that on that day the sovereign people must plant in the gardens of the Tuileries, as the tree of liberty, an aspen instead of

an oak; and the apostate capuchin Chabot harangued for three hours in the Church of the Foundlings, exciting the people to insurrection; while Santerre was equally busy in the suburb St. Antoine, and other persons in various other districts of Paris. On the morning of the 20th, Petion sought to avoid responsibility by going to Versailles, under pretence of showing that place to his guests, the English patriots. Roederer, the general secretary of the department, announced to the National Assembly that 100,000 persons, in military array, who were collected on the site of the Bastille, encouraged by the presence of three members of the Legislature and the inactivity of the municipality, intended, after presenting a petition in that hall, to repair to the Palace of the Tuileries; and he requested the enforcement of the law by prohibiting the admission of armed petitioners.

During the debate the mob required admission, and obtained it by promising that they would leave their petition with the Assembly and not proceed to the Palace. One Huguenin,[1] formerly a provincial lawyer, and at that time married to a woman who kept a house of ill fame, read the petition, which was

1 This Huguenin made himself the mayor of the insurgent municipality on the 10th of August, 1792, and during a fortnight plundered £250,000 in the palaces of the King and of the emigrated nobles. He is now one of Bonaparte's privy counsellors, and his

replete with threats and invectives against the King and Queen, and declared that the sovereign people had risen to avenge their outraged majesty, and blood must flow before the tree of liberty would flourish in peace. Two hours were then occupied by the petitioners marching through the hall. They were a motley and squalid band, drawn from all the receptacles of beggary, idleness, prostitution and infamy in Paris, armed with pikes, rusty swords, pick-axes and clubs. This miserable battalion consisted of coal-men, chimney-sweepers, shoe-blacks, wharf-porters, negroes male and female, and women of the lowest and most abandoned class. They carried ensigns, with inscriptions denoting sanguinary ferocity, occasionally intermixed with coarse ribaldry. Some were inscribed, "Tyrants, tremble! or be just and repair the liberties of the people," "Louis, the sovereign people are tired of suffering — tremble, tyrant, thine hour is come!" and "Thou Austrian wh——e, Marie Antoinette, we want thine head on a pike." One man had a reeking human heart stuck on the point of a sword, inscribed, "The heart of an aristocrat"; one carried ragged breeches on a

wife has her grand routs frequented by all the fashionables, even the Imperial Corsicans. By other plunders, he is now enriched to the amount of £600,000.—*Les Nouvelles à la Main*, Brumaire, year 13 No. iii.

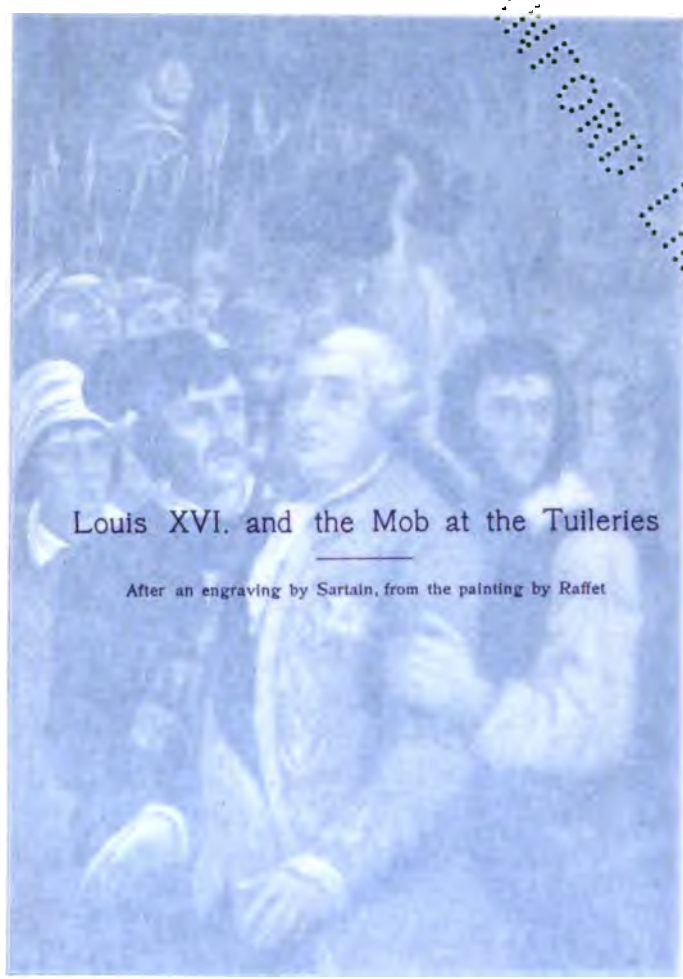
pike, inscribed, "Libres et sans-culottes," while others stuck on their arms pieces of bread, cheese and other food. At the close of the procession, a pair of colours, with the inscription "Death to all aristocrats!" were presented to the Assembly, and were graciously received.

On leaving the polluted hall of the Legislature the mob divided into three bodies, headed by the bankrupt brewer Santerre, by the swindler Saint-Huruge, and by the prostitute Theroigne de Mericourt. Regardless of their promise, they proceeded to the Palace. The King, who had from a window observed their proceedings, repaired to a chamber called the Œil-de-Bœuf, the door of which was immediately assailed with various engines, and, among others, with a dismounted cannon, which was carried upstairs by main strength and used as a battering-ram. The Swiss Guards were preparing to shed their blood in an unavailing defence, but the King commanded them to desist, and calling four grenadiers to support him, unbarred the door, and presented himself to the furious multitude. His friends, fearing he would be borne down by the rapidity and violence of the rabble, placed him in the recess of a window. The mob was so numerous and poured in so rapidly, that no one could effect any premeditated

purpose; but after venting a portion of fury in words and menacing gestures, was obliged to give place to others. Yet many pointed insults were offered. Le Gendre, the butcher, sallied into the room, at the head of a new division of rabble, uttering threats, and accosting the Monarch in the language of the shambles: "Monsieur," said he, and seeing the King surprised at this new style, he repeated it: "Yes, *Monsieur*, listen to us—yes, Monsieur, it is your duty to listen to us; you are a traitor; you have always deceived us, and deceive us still; but take care of yourself, Monsieur, the measure is full, and the people are tired of being your dupes." After this harangue, one of the mob presented a bottle and desired the King to drink the health of the nation, which he immediately did; another, evidently in liquor, and hearing the King say that the nation had no better friend than himself, required him to prove it by putting on the red cap; and on his consenting, two of them placed it on the top of his hair, for it was too small for his head. The King yielded to this indignity under a firm persuasion that, had he resisted, the drunken man would have plunged his pike into his bowels. No doubt can be entertained—indeed, it is avowed by writers of every party—that the intention of the insurgents was, as has already

been stated, to assassinate the King. But, although the most infamous libels were hawked about and sold at a low price in the gardens of the Palace, and the most treasonable and inflammatory falsehoods scratched and chalked on the walls, the work of murder was left incomplete, and his virtue, for the last time, triumphed over the plots of his enemies.

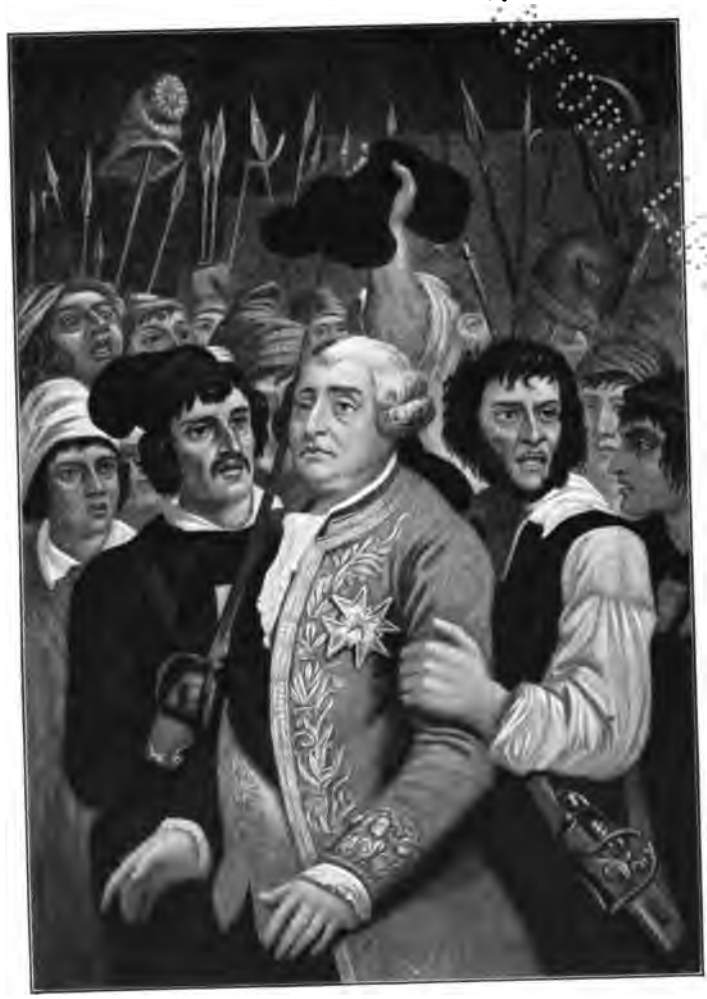
As usual, since the Revolution, great part of the popular rage was directed against the Queen. On the first alarm she caught up the Dauphin in her arms and ran towards the Œil-de-Bœuf, but the mob had already blocked up the passages; she was stopped in the council-room by General Wittinghoff, and the minister La Jarre, who formed a feeble rampart of the council-table, behind which they placed the Queen, the Dauphin, the Princess Royal, and all the ladies who refused to quit her side. There the Queen was obliged to remain during the whole of these horrible scenes, agonised by a knowledge of the King's dangers, and a helpless auditor of the incendiary and obscene reproaches which wretches of the lowest class seemed unwearied in repeating. The Dauphin, like his father, was disguised in the blood-coloured emblem of licentiousness; and the Queen was compelled to submit to the same disgrace. Marie Antoinette displayed that noble contempt of death



Louis XVI. and the Mob at the Tuileries

After an engraving by Sartain, from the painting by Raffet

Louis XVI. and the Mob at the Tuileries



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which distinguished the King. She was desirous to send back a body of grenadiers whom he had detached for her protection, but they persisted in obeying their first orders. At length Santerre forced his way to the place, and snatched the red cap from the Dauphin, exclaiming, "The child is smothered! why is this cap left on his head?" and then, in a low but distinct voice, added to the Queen, "Madam, you have very awkward friends; *I know those who would serve you much better.*" That brigand, too, wanted to share with Talleyrand and other traitors the King's bounty of his Civil List and to add corruption to his other enormities.

The behaviour of the King's sister, the Princess Elizabeth, was in perfect conformity with that of her august relatives. She followed the King to the Œil-de-Bœuf, where the mob, thinking she was the Queen, loaded her with insults and threats. Some of her attendants attempting to explain the mistake, "For God's sake," she said, "do not undeceive them; is it not better they should shed my blood than that of my sister?" In the whole course of the day she never left her brother's side, nor ever lost her presence of mind.

The National Assembly, which had risen immediately after the departure of the mob, resumed

their sitting in the afternoon; they treated with rudeness, and frequently interrupted those members who described in terms of just indignation the atrocities which were committed in the Palace; but at length they deputed twenty-four members to express their solicitude for the King's safety. The deputation reached him with difficulty, and, when the mob, grown languid by the repetition of insults, no longer showed a formidable aspect, offered to protect him and share his dangers. The King said he was in the midst of his people, and feared nothing. While the deputies were fruitlessly endeavouring to disperse the mob, Petion, at six o'clock in the evening, arrived at the Palace, and with the most perfect composure, he advanced to the King, saying, "Sire, I was only this moment informed of your situation, but you have nothing to fear." "Nothing to fear!" replied the King with indignation; "the man whose conscience is pure and free from reproach can never fear. Here, my friend," he added, taking the hand of a grenadier and pressing it against his bosom, "feel! and tell that man if my heart beats faster than usual." The mob had frequently pressed him with furious acclamations to sanction two unconstitutional decrees, and recall the Jacobin ministers, but he replied, "I shall do what

I consider right; this is not the moment for you to ask, or for me to grant favours." Convinced that the insurrection would not produce the expected advantages, Petion said, "Citizens, you have now made your desires known to the hereditary representative with the energy and dignity of a free people who understand their rights. The King is at present acquainted with, and will undoubtedly pay proper regard to the intentions of the *sovereign*. You ought now to retire with calmness and decency that your intentions may not be calumniated." The obedient sovereign rabble immediately filed off through the King's apartments; at nine the Palace was cleared.

Talleyrand was acquainted within forty-eight hours in London, with the miscarriage of the attempts of the regicides at Paris, and in the bitterness of his disappointment wrote to his female friend on the 23rd:

"Your courier of the 20th preceded the one from the minister by two hours. Both arrived yesterday in the evening, when I least expected them, and brought the most unlooked-for, unaccountable and incomprehensible information. So certain was I of success that, being indirectly accredited to the Court of a Monarch, I had for decency's sake

already bespoken a mourning-dress for what I supposed the departed French monarchy. In what manner did Petion, Roland, Brissot, Condorcet, Manuel, and the whole pack of French and English patriots, follow our plans, and read my explanation, to commit such foolish and unwarrantable blunders? Were Louis XVI. now well-encompassed and advised, he might obtain a most exemplary revenge, and adjourn the French Republic for many years. It seems that all the firmness and consistency was on that day reserved for the Court, and that all its former folly and weakness had smuggled themselves among the ranks of the people, or entered the hearts and bewildered the brains of their leaders. What! forty thousand patriots masters of the Palace for ten hours and not continue so for ever! It is, and will remain, an incomprehensible mystery to me. I have been up all the night, ruminating with Chauvelin how to conduct ourselves here; what to say to the British ministers, or to the King of Great Britain; what to write to Orleans, to Petion, to the French ministers and to the King of the French. Our situation, by this absurd and impolitic bustle, is rendered extremely critical and unpleasant. What confidence will the English Government attach to our assertions after this in-

trusion of an armed force into the habitation of our Chief Magistrate? And what dependence will the English patriots place in our future promise of a universal republic, when they come to France, as it were, merely to witness the *first* disgrace that the French patriots ever experienced? If I tell them that the laws will soon force an executioner to strike the blow the assassins refused, they will not believe me, and they are in the right.

"I was this moment interrupted by the arrival of other despatches with a letter from Louis himself, in which he announces his firm determination to punish those public functionaries who were not at their post or who had neglected their duty on the 20th. This we have orders to declare publicly whenever any questions are put to us relative to the late events. He expects La Fayette, but presages too much from the presence of a man of his weak character, who possesses neither the talents nor the principles of a General Monk. Were order once to be restored, he would sink into a merited oblivion and a well-deserved obscurity. This truth he is aware of, and knows that it is only in continuing to be the faithful subject of the sovereign people that he can be anything. Should he come to Paris, it is to revive his dying popularity more

than to revive the expiring monarchy. The advice of the La Methes to try to procure some official note from this Court reprobating the popular excesses against the King and his family is inconsiderate. It cannot be demanded, and if demanded will not be complied with, as it would be an attempt to interfere in the internal affairs of France, which we have so often and so justly declared to foreign States that we would never permit. As I have no time to write, inform them of this observation.

"The calumny of my enemies that I use the credit I have from the patriots at Paris on houses in this city to speculate to my private advantage and neglect their interest, certainly originates from the malignity and vengeance of the English patriots, and will die away at their departure, which cannot be distant, as their *brilliant campaign* must be nearly at an end. I have written four lines of consolation to the Mayor, and six words to the Duke. I pity neither of them for having suffered themselves to be outwitted even by the Court. Inform nobody, except the La Methes, of your having heard from me, or that you have written to me. This unfortunate failure has created a disagreeable sensation in this country even among those who wish well to the Revolution. The reports of my agents are unanimous on this subject;

one of them even heard a famous member of the Opposition say this morning that 'Two or three more such ill-conducted attempts would force the friends of liberty here to disown those in France.'"

Petion stated the events of the 20th in a speech at the National Assembly made up of gross falsehoods and of those fallacious equivocations which prove more thorough depravity of mind than is demonstrated by the most flagrant falsehoods. "Everything," said he, "indicates the greatest tranquillity. Persons, property —all were respected. What has happened? The people were passing through the Tuileries, when several citizens proceeded to the King's apartments; they insulted nobody, nor had the King any reason to complain!" Such was the detestable attempt of this public functionary to palliate a premeditated, forcible irruption of forty thousand people into the private apartments of the Sovereign, so as to make it appear the accidental intrusion of several persons who were passing through the Tuileries, but who insulted no one, and gave the King himself no right to complain. The Assembly loudly applauded this infamous harangue, and closed the sitting at ten o'clock without expressing the slightest disapprobation of the events of the day.[1] But although the legislative

1 See "Biographical Memoirs by Adolphus," vol. i., p. 67 *et seq.*

body was so easily satisfied, as Talleyrand had apprehended, the public in all parts of the kingdom expressed the highest indignation. That part of the populace at Paris which had not been actively engaged in the insurrection, mingled with their invectives against those who excited it expressions of admiration at the firm and noble conduct of the King and his family. The National Guards seemed also to partake in the general remorse, by their honest and effectual efforts to prevent armed and seditious collections of the people. The King increased these favourable impressions by a judicious proclamation denouncing the conduct and views of the factious, asserting his own resolution not to be impelled by force to the adoption of measures which he considered repugnant to the public interest, and declaring that if they who wished to overthrow monarchy had need of one crime more, they might commit it.

This proclamation produced a general sensation in favour of the King, but its desponding terms were truly indicative of the state of his mind. He gave way to gloomy forebodings, frequently perused the history of our Charles I., and wished only to die by

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In these well-written and impartial Memoirs, the characters of La Fayette, Petion, Brissot and other notorious rebels are drawn with a masterly hand, and well worthy of attention.

the hand of an assassin, that the nation might not be stigmatised for his murder. He rejected all propositions for effecting his escape, lest his family should fall victims to the popular fury—a thought he could not endure, though he would have been himself a willing and contented sacrifice.[1] To counteract the probable effect of the public feeling, the Jacobins endeavoured to keep up an active solicitude respecting the two unsanctioned decrees, and the Assembly rendered ministers responsible for the refusal of the sanction. Contradictory opinions were advanced with great acrimony, and the contest of parties appeared to be equally balanced; but the Jacobins had the unrivalled advantage of posting inflammatory placards, terrifying the tranquil or timid out of the Assembly, and procuring daily deputations with incendiary petitions. Many loyal addresses were also forwarded from departments and municipalities; but the arrival of a fresh gang of Marseillais brigands gave increased spirits to the Jacobins and presaged final success to their efforts.

At this crisis intelligence arrived that the armies had learnt with lively indignation the occurrences of the 20th of June, and that several battalions had only

1 See Bertrand's Private Memoirs," vol. ii., p. 296 *et seq.*

been restrained from repairing to Paris and chastising those who had insulted the King, by La Fayette, who promised to be the bearer of their sentiments and enforce them in the Assembly. As Talleyrand predicted in his letter, the King and his friends could expect, or if they expected, would experience, no favourable effect in consequence of the mission of this General. After pronouncing a speech at the bar of the Assembly, he wanted both presence of mind to urge the consideration of his message and resolution to appeal against the indecency with which he was treated. The populace, who had paid him some marks of respect on his arrival, now burnt him in effigy; while from the tribunes of the Jacobin and Cordeliers' Clubs denunciations and ludicrous invectives were showered on him in abundance. Disappointed, derided, and trembling for his safety, this rash and shallow adventurer quitted Paris without gaining either the slightest advantage for himself or the King, but by his temerity and weakness added to the resources as well as to the insolence of traitors and conspirators.

Though it might be supposed that Talleyrand's time was now pretty well taken up with political schemes and machinations, his private correspondence proves that his intrigues with women continued as

usual, and had even come to the knowledge of his Parisian and political mistress. He wrote to her under date July 2nd:

"As I have been silent about Narbonne's frequent visits to you, and your still more frequent trips to the Bois de Boulogne, I was rather surprised that you should upbraid me for my *tête-à-tête* with Madame de N—— and Lady A——, as you call her. Accustomed to the society of women from my youth, and to divert my mind after hard labour or study with their lively sallies, you could not expect me to renounce them here, where I am almost worn out with vexatious affairs, and, because I could not converse with you, see in private no other person of your sex. These pretensions would be ridiculous on your part and insupportable on mine. But I wrong you—you have too much sense to give way to such extravagant ideas. Let me, therefore, consider what can be the real cause of this petty but adroit sortie! Shall I explain it to you? Yes, I must, that you may be convinced, for the hundredth time, of its being out of the power of women, with all their natural cunning and hypocrisy, to impose upon me. You had heard of the orders I received from the King to come over to France, and that this voyage agreed with the wishes of my other constituents.

You concluded, in consequence, that I should soon arrive, and when arrived be informed of your many private conferences with several active citizens, as a Narbonne, a Sartine, &c. To be beforehand with me, you accuse me of infidelities, of which you cannot be certain, concluding from my silence that your manœuvres, marches and counter-marches are unknown to me. You might, however, have guessed, from your having spies about me, that I might also in my turn not be entirely without some intelligence concerning you. What would you think of my discretion were I now to tell you, from hour to hour, from day to day, and from night to night, those whom you have admitted and those whom you have excluded from your boudoir; those you have visited, and by whom you have been visited; whom you met five times in six days in the cottage at the Bois de Boulogne; your rendezvous in the private box at the Opera, at your milliner's, on the New Boulevard, at the Vauxhall d'Eté, &c.? Thank me, therefore, for my good-natured silence, and cease your grave airs, and our peace is concluded before hostilities have commenced. To convince you, also, of the sincerity of my offers of reconciliation, and that my complacency is as great as your curiosity (between you and me

jealousy is out of the question), I will let you know that Madame de N—— was my acquaintance at Versailles, where we were neighbours; and that now, when at leisure, I merely pay her a few attentions to console her for the absence of her valiant husband, encamped, with the other defenders of the altar and the throne, somewhere in Germany, on the banks of the Rhine. The person you call Lady A—— is the daughter of an honest Swiss merchant formerly settled here, who, after two bankruptcies, went to make his fortune in India, leaving his wife and child to shift for themselves. The latter, of course, accepted of the brilliant offers of Lord A——, and lived with him two years, until he had squandered away a great part of his property in gambling and could no longer keep her in the same extravagant style as before. Since that period she has had several lovers, but, as she speaks good French, I have agreed to pay her one hundred guineas per month for her friendship and the political services and information she may afford me. Being a woman of abilities and acquainted with several persons in credit at Court, she procures me much useful intelligence which I could obtain in no other quarter. I can, therefore, in conscience, do no less than place this monthly stipend to the account of

the nation as secret-service money. Let this remain *entre nous*, but I hope that this confidence will remove your anxiety about my general intercourse with females, as reported to you. At my age, and with my experience, a man must be mad to ruin himself with women. She wished to accompany me to Paris, but she requires some years' more experience before I dare introduce her into that vast field of intrigue; I leave her, therefore, during my absence under the trusty care of our Secretary of Legation, Rheinhard, one of the most phlegmatic Germans I ever met with, though he is not without talents.

"One of *my* English patriots, just returned from Paris, has this instant left me. If all his patriotic countrymen possessed the same enthusiasm which he does, a Republican fraternity would soon be established between France and England, and the Channel exist no longer, or be dried up. He speaks with rapture of what he has seen and experienced, and is confident of bringing about a revolution here, as soon as a republic is proclaimed in France. He ascribes the late disappointment to want of energy in Santerre and Huguenin. Being ordered by the insurrection committee at Paris on an expedition to Yorkshire and to Scotland, I was obliged to advance

him one hundred and fifty guineas, though I am thoroughly convinced that he was paid all his expenses before he left France. He showed with ecstasy his red cap, and the tricoloured cockade, and intends to buy and distribute many dozens of them during his journey, which will probably extend as far as Ireland, as I want a trusty and active person there; and he has obtained the entire confidence of our principal patriots. Inform Petion of these particulars, but let nobody else know that I have written to you. In four days I will set out for France, and this will, therefore, in all probability, be the last letter you will receive from me before I see you. Embrace our dear boy. I have consulted one of the first surgeons here, who gives me hope that, in following his prescription, the deafness will be cured."

On the 7th of July, Talleyrand left London for Paris, where he arrived on the 11th. The period of the second confederation now approached, and it was rendered additionally alarming by the arrival of large bands of Fédérés from the departments, who were selected from the most furious or fanatical members of clubs, and presented petitions of the most inflammatory and unconstitutional tendency, opening avowing their determination of dethroning

the King, and demanding his immediate trial and death. Among these men, those called the Marseillais Fédérés particularly distinguished themselves for their violence and sanguinary threats. They were headed by some revolutionists from that city, but otherwise consisted chiefly of Corsican criminals, released from the galleys at Marseilles; or of Piedmontese vagabonds or brigands, engaged in the service of the conspirators by the promise of pillage. A plot, formed by Santerre, to murder the Queen was also betrayed, and the assassin arrested, but rescued by his party. The public were kept in alarm by reports of conspiracies to be executed on the day of confederation. The barracks of the Military School were searched on account of this suspicion, and the troops of the line compelled to leave Paris. The people were even agitated by a report that gunpowder was deposited under the altar to blow up the National Assembly in the act of taking the oath, and were only undeceived by an examination on the spot. Talleyrand was present, but did not officiate at the ceremony of this confederation, which, though loaded with several new burlesque pageantries, was, however, on the whole, quiet and orderly. The Royal Family were placed in a balcony covered with crimson velvet, which gave rise to some petulant exclamations

from the mob; and the cries of "Vive le Roi!" were drowned with "Vive Petion!" "Vivent les Jacobins!" "A bas le veto!" The King, however, taking the oath on the altar, instead of remaining in his place as on the former occasion, completely gratified the populace, and he quitted the Champ de Mars amidst loud and general acclamations. But the very next day the Fédérés again petitioned for the deposition of the King, and declared their fixed determination to adopt no part of the Constitution but the Rights of Man; and to throw a veil over that, they required, also, the convocation of the primary assemblies, at which all but mendicants and vagrants should vote, for the purpose of fixing the number of representatives competent to form a national convention and of confirming the deposition of the King.

Of all the factious and conspirators then at Paris, Talleyrand had the least to apprehend from a new revolution. If the Royalists had been victorious, he was safe, his treachery being unknown to his Prince; and if the Orleanists, or Republicans, got the better of their opponents, the services he had rendered them, at the expense of his duty to his Sovereign, promised him a reward instead of proscription. He hastened back, however, to England,

and landed at Dover on the 21st of July, where he wrote to his mistress on the same day:

"Though labouring under a severe indisposition, in consequence of a boisterous passage, I shall endeavour to forget the pains of my body in confiding to my friend the troubles of my mind. I have certainly seen the last King of the French for the last time! This event, you will say, is what I have long wished for. True. But I expected some sort of government, either a dictatorship or a republic, to be prepared to succeed immediately, whilst I have found no plans for the establishment of a new system, though I have been so long plotting the destruction of the old one. Of this improvidence anarchists, destitute of virtue and patriotism, will take advantage. They will wade through seas of blood, and through ruins of cities and towns, of trade and agriculture, to a tyranny which (unless circumstances should happen, of which there is not the most distant probability) must necessarily cause the dissolution of civilised society. In that vortex of confusion and crimes, what patriotism can be safe, and what innocence respected? Who can prevent our countrymen from butchering each other in civil wars? or what means have we to oppose to foreign enemies who, after vanquishing our divided forces, will partition our

country, and dispose of Frenchmen—like the unfortunate Poles—to proud, unmerciful, or tyrannical neighbours? These ideas are gloomy, and I sincerely wish they may prove erroneous; but, for my part, I would this moment rather inhabit the forests of Africa and America, than France. On one hand we see the King deserted by those who ought to be his friends, and deprived of his authority, a willing sacrifice to his earnest endeavours to preserve the Constitution; the Duke of Orleans determined to annihilate the throne, without the means of raising a new fabric on its ruins; whilst Petion, Brissot, and their partisans are without any other union of views than the removal of Louis XVI.; but they all mistrust each other, and, as far as they have let me into their secrets, these Republicans have not yet agreed to declare France a republic. Have I not reason, therefore, to be alarmed whilst everything is left to chance and nothing is fixed? The destiny of France has (compared with that of other great States) hitherto been singularly prosperous. This is my only consolation for her present critical situation, and my sole hope that she will escape the present numerous internal and external dangers which now threaten an almost inevitable ruin. I think myself, however, extremely fortunate in having a plausible pretext for

being absent; and I conjure you, should any proposal for recalling me come to your knowledge, to endeavour to dissuade it, or let me know it in time, that I may prepare some excuse for not obeying, which I am resolved to do, let the consequences be what they will.

"The contents of this letter I intended to communicate to you in person before I left Paris; but on the day of my departure, when I promised to call upon you, Petion remained with me until eleven o'clock at night; nor did he quit me before he saw me into my carriage on my return—whether from suspicion, or merely from attention I am at a loss to divine; but I trust, through my friend's ingenuity, to be able to solve this perplexing mystery. You must be more regular and more particular in your letters than formerly. The times are much altered for the worse. Spare no expense in couriers or for private information. From the great fermentation among the people at this momentous crisis, something terrible may daily be expected; you will, therefore, easily judge of my impatience and anxiety to hear from you.

"I have now brought over with me (with the exception of £50,000 laid out in national property) my whole fortune. As I employed a man in whom I do not much confide to procure me bills on London, this precaution of mine may come to the ears of the

patriots, and incur their censure. Should this be the case, you may say that this operation was merely a financial speculation, in consequence of the lowness of the Exchange, and that I intend to remit my money over again and deposit it in our Funds when the Exchange becomes more in our favour, which must happen when the patriots have seized on the government and begin to display their usual energy."

The faction which had so long agitated the capital was, at this period, less interested in opposing the efforts of an external enemy than in procuring the downfall of the Royal power, against which their animosity daily increased. Their private councils were turbulent and uncertain, and their mutual rivalry was with difficulty prevented from producing open hostilities. The contempt of the public for their characters and proceedings prevented any general exertion in their behalf; and, although delusion and calumny had rendered the people indifferent to the fate of the Royal Family, the faction could obtain no strenuous indications of favour, except from hired mobs, prompted petitioners and their own immediate dependents and expectants. Such were at once their malice and their impotency, that they seriously discussed the propriety of murdering one of their own friends, and imputing

the crime to the Court, in order to excite the indignation of the people. The Fédérés from the departments were less than three thousand in number, but, as they formed the chief hope of the party, they were detained in Paris, contrary to a decree of the Assembly, directing them after the confederation to repair to the camp at Soissons. These vagabonds petitioned the Assembly to suspend the executive power in the person of the King, to discharge the staff and other military officers appointed by him, to change the judicial bodies, to impeach La Fayette and to punish all persons suspected of aristocracy. This insolent attempt of a handful of provincial adventurers to legislate in all matters civil and military for the whole kingdom, occasioned some surprise; but the Assembly, though they did not comply with the unwarrantable demands of the petitioners, basely invited them to the honours of the sitting. To procure a decree of forfeiture of the crown was the general aim of all the members forming the popular junto, but their ulterior projects, as Talleyrand remarked in his letter, were widely different. Some thought of establishing a Council of Regency during the minority of the Dauphin, and ruling the realm by their influence in the Legislature; a second party hoped to make the Duke of Orleans Regent, and,

by moulding him to their will, to govern in his name; while a third party, too low to expect influence at Court, too limited in talents to gain ascendency in the Legislature, and too recently introduced to hope for authority with the Duke of Orleans, concealed their views with cautious mystery, intending to make the utmost advantage of any change, but at all events to maintain their influence with the rabble, by whose means they could, at all times, render themselves formidable and dreaded. Such were the infamous monsters in the shape of men, who, on the 10th of August, overturned, in four hours, a throne which had withstood the shock of fourteen centuries; who directed the murder of prisoners on the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th of September; and who, on the 22nd of the same month, polluted with plunder and stained with blood, became the founders of the French Republic.

As soon as the fatal catastrophe of the 10th of August was known in this country, our Court wrote to Lord Gower, the Ambassador at Paris, expressing the King's deep affliction at the extent and deplorable consequences of the late disturbance, both on account of his personal attachment to Their Most Christian Majesties and his earnest desire for the tranquillity and prosperity of a kingdom with which he was on terms of friendship. As the exercise

of the executive power had been withdrawn from Louis XVI., Lord Gower was directed to leave Paris, as his credentials could be no longer valid, and as that step appeared most conformable to the neutrality hitherto observed. But in all conversations he was directed to declare that His Majesty intended to observe the principles of neutrality in everything regarding the internal government of France; nor did he conceive that he departed from that principle in manifesting, by every means in his power, his solicitude for the personal safety of Their Most Christian Majesties and their family, hoping they would be preserved from every act of violence, the commission of which could not fail to excite sentiments of universal indignation throughout Europe.[1]

In answering this note, Le Brun, the new Minister for Foreign Affairs, expressed polite regret at the resolution to remove the Ambassador; but that feeling was abated by the renewed assurance of neutrality, which was the result of an intention wisely considered and formally expressed by His Britannic Majesty not to meddle with the interior arrangements of the affairs of France. The Minister then dwelt with admiration on the efforts of the English

1 See "Rivington's Annual Register for 1792," part ii., p. 326.

nation in favour of liberty, and the unalienable sovereignty of the people; and declared that the French nation had good grounds to hope the British Cabinet would not, at this decisive moment, depart from that justice, moderation and impartiality which it had hitherto manifested.[1]

No official statement mentions that Lord Gower left any *chargé d'affaires* behind him at Paris, nor that our Government appointed any diplomatic agent there as its representative to the self-created Executive Councils. Talleyrand, however, in a letter to his mistress, sends private information to Petion of a gentleman indirectly accredited to them by our ministers. He writes, under date the 9th of September:

"According to Petion's confidential request, I send you all the particulars I have been able to collect concerning the person indirectly accredited to our Provisional Government by the English Ministry, and of which you must not fail immediately to transmit him a copy. Mr. Munroe is a Scotchman by birth, and was formerly a captain in the 41st Regiment of Foot, from which, about three years ago,

1 See "Rivington's Annual Register for 1792," part ii., p. 326; "Marsh's History of the Politics, &c." chap. ix.; and "Bertrand's Annals," vol. ii., p. 335.

he was obliged to sell out, having involved himself in some pecuniary difficulties by marriage with a lady of noble family, but of no fortune, by whom he had several children. In 1790, during the insurrection in Brabant, he went to Brussels, and was made a major in the Britannic legion of the patriotic army. It is also supposed that he was there employed secretly by the English Government to report the occurrences during the campaign, and to watch both General Koehler, an English officer, but commander-in-chief of the patriots, and Colonel Gardner, the British agent to the patriotic Belgic Congress. After the Austrians had defeated the patriots, and their troops were disbanded, he returned to England, but was, together with General Koehler, soon again employed by the British ministers in a military-political mission to Turkey. When at Constantinople he disagreed with Koehler, and in consequence returned home early last summer. He is a man of parts, but has never hitherto shone in any political transactions or negotiations, and is therefore deemed a better officer than diplomate. My opinion is that he has instructions rather to watch our military movements and undertakings than to penetrate into the views of our Cabinet. Indeed, as true friends of general freedom, the members of our Executive

Council act with a justice, candour, frankness, and an openness of heart worthy their situation, principles, and professions, in a manner that leaves no secrets to be discovered, even by the most subtle agent! As to his political principles, though he has served among patriots, I am told that he is a moderate aristocrat, and, though not rich, of a character not to be tempted with money. But as he is still young, and has lost his wife, some of our young, amiable and rich female *sans-culottes* might, at least without danger, lay siege to his heart, and Venus may, perhaps, conquer in the field where Plutus would be sure of a defeat. Everything considered, I strongly recommend that no other than female agents should be employed about him, being brave as well as disinterested. I have hitherto been unable to procure any of his ciphers. As he seems in a fair way of becoming a rising favourite with the English ministers, advise Petion to treat him with distinction.

"From Petion's last letter, I apprehend that a coolness or mistrust subsists between him and some of the new ministers, which prevents me from communicating this intelligence to Le Brun, or to himself, in the usual way, to be laid before all the members of the committee. You must find out the cause of this ambiguity, and inform me of it in your next.

But what can be the reason of your long silence? I have not heard from you these ten days—a period so interesting to all friends of liberty, and so terrible to all its enemies. I am greatly mistaken if the late acts of vigour at Paris have not made every prince tremble upon his throne, and every aristocrat turn pale with disappointment, rage or terror. A few more such dreadfully glorious examples, and Liberty and Equality will then shed their benign influence over the universe, and the world contain a race of brothers. I supped last night at the Scotch Lord M——ld's, in Great George Street, not far from St. James's, where the party—all aristocrats, though plagued with the infection which the vicinity of Courts always introduces—seemed panic-struck and ready to capitulate with the *sans-culottes*. They had read in a ministerial paper called *The Times*, a full account of the late noble scenes in and near the prison (sent, no doubt, by some secret British agent, being rather exaggerated), and were so petrified with horror that they looked as if uncertain whether their own heads were still on their shoulders. They seemed ready to sacrifice their ridiculous rank, their puerile decorations and their usurped property to preserve their petty, insignificant, useless existence, and to want only the word of command for subscribing,

on their knees, their oath of allegiance to their natural sovereign—the sovereign people!

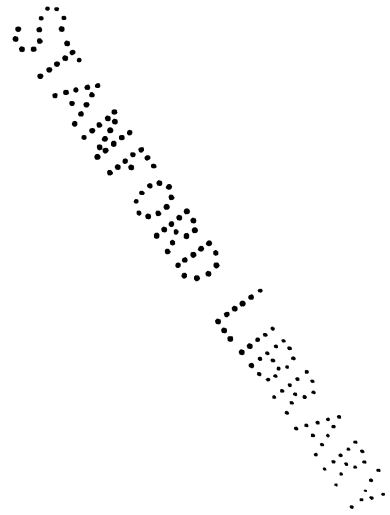
"I repeat again, and you may tell it to Petion, that the patriots must continue to reign by terror if they desire their names to be handed down to posterity with those of Brutus, Gracchus, Publicola or Cato of antiquity. When once liberty and equality are peaceably placed, not on thrones or altars, but in the bosoms of all people, and of all classes of people, then clemency may, with honour and safety, become the order of the day!"

The period so interesting to all the friends of liberty, and the acts of vigour which Talleyrand mentions with so much encomium and satisfaction, were the terrible and savage massacres of prisoners during the 2nd, 3rd and 4th of September. Petion, Danton, Marat, Manuel, Mehée de la Touche, and other rebels of the same description, needy themselves, and surrounded by rapacious adherents, found but little satisfaction in the power they had usurped since the 10th of August, and which might not be permanent; they, therefore, formed plans of numerous imprisonments, and a massacre which might enrich them and all their dependents. The decrees of the Assembly for imprisoning priests and suspected characters, for domiciliary visits, and for establishing

Massacre of September, 1792

From an engraving of a contemporary print

a revolutionary tribunal, which tried criminals for treason against the nation, were all favourable to this new conspiracy, the parties of which loaded themselves with the spoils of such as could compound by means of gold for their safety, and glutted their vengeance or forwarded their political projects by the sacrifice of others. Many were carried to prison without the allegation of any crime but their property, talents and loyalty. Arrests were executed in all quarters—in houses, streets, squares, gardens, churches and theatres. The hackney coaches, soldiers and officers of justice were all employed in taking persons into custody and conveying them to prison. The priests and ex-nobles were told they would be transported to the coast of Africa. Danton obtained lists of the prisoners, and Petion or Manuel daily numbered the victims, encouraging them to collect their property by an ambiguous declaration that they would be liberated on the 2nd of September. That day was fixed on for the muster of the new levies in the Champ de Mars, whence they were to march in a body to meet the Austrian and Prussian invaders in Champagne. In the course of the day alarming reports were circulated and fatal jealousies excited. It was asserted that the Prussians, having taken Chalons, were within ten leagues of Paris.



Massacre of September, 1792

From an engraving of a cartoon of the period

Massacre of September 1792

Kasahorow Foundation

They were to be joined by an immense body in the departments, and reinforced by a party in the capital, who, as soon as the new levies had left the city, would rise, open the prisons, murder the patriots and one-tenth of the citizens, release the Royal Family and reinstate the King in his pristine power. At one o'clock the cannon of alarm was fired, the tocsin sounded, the barriers were shut, and the country proclaimed in danger. The citizens, panic-struck and torpid with surprise, retired to their habitations; while a prepared band of assassins went to the various prisons, where they butchered one by one the ex-nobles, the priests, the Swiss officers, and all other arrested persons. They instituted in each prison a pretended court of justice, composed of self-constituted judges, chiefly brigands under the hand of justice or escaped from the galleys, many of whom could not read. These ruffians ordered the execution of almost every person brought before them; and it was the melancholy employment of those confined and expecting their fate to examine the various modes of receiving the stroke of death, and calculate in which position it appeared to give least pain or occasion the smallest struggle. The sentence of acquittal pronounced in favour of a few was drowned in the yell of the exterminators around the doors,

and they, too, were inhumanly slain. The terrors of some who attended as witnesses overcoming their presence of mind, they were murdered amongst other victims.

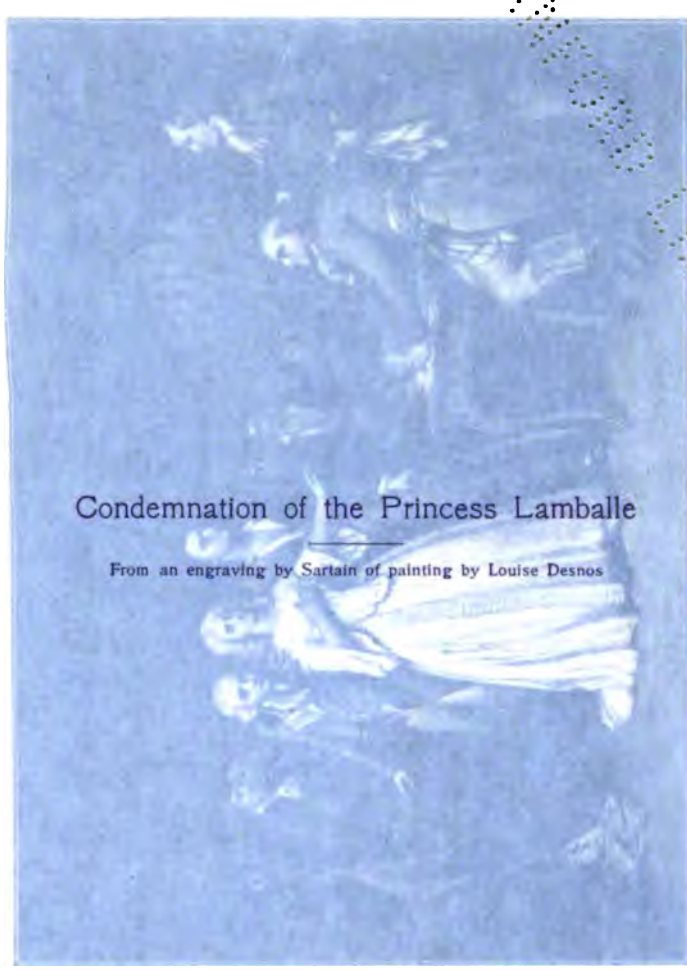
These horrible scenes continued three days, and though some attempts were made in the National Assembly to arrest their progress, the number of individuals concurring in particular parts of the transaction prevented any general exertion. Petion and Roland made no vigorous representations, because they rejoiced at the extermination of priests and nobles. Brissot forbore exerting himself, because some personal enemies of his own were confined, and he hoped they would be numbered among the killed. Tallien and Manuel, who were sent with other members of the Commune to stay the hands of the assassins, rather encouraged and justified than impeded them. Mehée de la Touche and Marat paid the assassins for their patriotism; and Danton, when application was made to him, answered, "The devil take the prisoners! what care I for their fate!" nor did the work of slaughter cease till the objects of vengeance no longer existed. Amid these horrible transactions, acts of heroic virtue beamed forth on the part of the sufferers, which afford some relief to those who peruse the dismal annals of that period.

The priests bore their fate with such fortitude and resignation as to call to mind, in a corrupt age and atheistical nation, the genuine portrait of the primitive martyrs. Many individuals exhibited heroic courage, and none acquired more admiration than two young ladies named De Sombreuil and Cazotte, who, after receiving several wounds, rescued their fathers by interposing their own persons to shield them from danger. On the other hand, the murderers displayed, not only an unrelenting ferocity, but a sedate malignity, generally only acquired by veteran practice. Faint gleams of generosity distinguished one or two from the rest; but hacking and hewing dead and living bodies with blunt instruments, tearing out entrails, drinking and smearing themselves with human blood, and parading the city with heads and hearts on pikes, were the characteristic employments of these bloodthirsty savages, while the Government permitted 30,000 National Guards to rest upon their arms without offering the slightest resistance.

The Princess de Lamballe was one of the victims whose fate was particularly commiserated. Safe in England in the spring of the same year, the author of these Memoirs was honoured and entrusted by the late unfortunate Queen of France to deliver her a letter of recall from a friend, not of command from a

sovereign. She made no hesitation in obeying what her heart desired more than her duty dictated, although she foresaw and foretold that this return to France would be fatal to her. Being confined in the prison of La Force after the 10th of August, she was brought before the tribunal of assassins established in the prison, and on nobly refusing to take the oath of hatred to the Royal Family—her relatives—was barbarously butchered, and her body mangled and exposed in a manner too indecent and too horrible for description. Her head and heart—the one stuck on the point of a sword, and the other on a pike—were carried in a sanguinary procession to the Temple, for the purpose of terrifying and insulting the Royal captives. The King and Queen were prevented from seeing the horrid spectacle, though not from hearing the tumult and abuse of the rabble. One of the commissioners on duty announced the Princess of Lamballe's murder in terms so brutal that the Queen fainted away, and even the good King, forgetting his usual patience, expressed his feelings in terms of indignation.[1] The number of persons killed in Paris

1 See "Journal de Clery," p. 25 *et seq.*, and "The Revolutionary Plutarch," vol. iii., p. 183, *note*. The Princess de Lamballe was one of the most amiable, accomplished and beautiful ladies of her age—a Princess of the blood of the House of Sardinia, and sister-in-law to the late Duke of Orleans.



Condemnation of the Princess Lamballe

From an engraving by Sartain of painting by Louise Desnos

Condemnation

CANCELLED

alone is computed at about 8,000, all unarmed, and no exertion made on their behalf in any quarter.

Those horrid deeds were the "dreadfully *glorious* examples," which Talleyrand in his letter recommended to be repeated, and "the *noble* scenes" which he jocosely states to have frightened the English aristocrats—scenes regarded even in France with such abhorrence that each victorious faction has ever since reproached and accused their rivals or opponents of being the contrivers and executors of them, and for that alone representing them as deserving the indignation and chastisement of their contemporaries. Were it, however, possible to discover the secret sentiments of each man of each party figuring in the blood-stained annals of that awful period, it is not hazarding too much to suppose that every faction furnished some direct or indirect accomplices or abettors; because when once a man forgets his duty, breaks his allegiance, and becomes a rebel, the step to assassination is but short, and when self-interest, vengeance, or ambition invites, easy and alluring. Who would have suspected that Talleyrand—a nobleman, a bishop, a man of erudition and of talents—could be guilty, not only of approving, but of commending these enormities, had not his own correspondence proved it?

Round Bonaparte's person, in Bonaparte's family,[1] in his senate, in his council of state, legislative body, and tribunate; among his grand officers of state, and of the legion of honour; among his field marshals, generals, ambassadors, judges and prefects, are numerous individuals accused by public opinion, and incontestibly proved by authentic documents, to have been among the most active Septembrists, or butchers; or among the still more guilty—those who encouraged, misled, directed and paid the assassins, and afterwards shared the spoils of the victims, while falsely disclaiming all knowledge of the perpetrators, or hypocritically blaming them for these unheard-of atrocities. Whether weltering in the bloody mire of the early days of the rebellion, or cringing in blood-stained palaces round an infamous Bonaparte; whether denying in the National Convention the existence of a Divinity, or kneeling in Notre Dame before the Pope as the Vicar of Christ; whether erecting altars to a Marat or thrones to a Bonaparte; whether extolling the virtues of the creole Empress of the French, or singing hymns to the creole Empress of the Haytians, revolutionary Frenchmen are the same—the most guilty,

1 See in "The Revolutionary Plutarch," the Lives of Lucien Bonaparte and General Murat, &c.

abandoned, debased and despicable of all beings that disgrace the human species.

If Talleyrand rejoiced here at the horrors committed in France, his mistress and correspondent, who was an eye-witness of what he only knew from reading reports, felt differently, and did not think herself even secure from the popular fury, though acquainted with, and under the protection of several of the principal chiefs of the ruling brigands of the day. This is evident from his last letter, written in this country to that lady under the date of 18th of September:

"How ridiculous your panic, and how unfounded your alarm! connected as you are with the *purest* and staunchest patriots, how can you apprehend that the proscription of persons of your cast will ever extend to you? Your sex, your services, and your patriotism —all assure your safety. I thought you had more firmness and better judgment—more confidence in my friendship, and less suspicion of the *morality* of my correspondents. You never were more necessary at Paris for my interest than at this momentous crisis; nor did I at any time less desire to see you in London. But as I must conclude from the contents of your letter that terror has entirely bewildered your senses, I have written both to Petion, that he may

procure you a pass for this country, and to Cabanis, to let you assume in the pass the name of his wife, and Charles, that of his son. This last precaution I am certain was unnecessary; but to quiet your troubled imagination, I have resorted to it as an infallible expedient for preventing any interruption in your voyage, Cabanis being intimate with all the members of the new Commune, and having openly declared himself in favour of the late necessary revolution. But before you quit Paris, I think it my duty to inform you that, in coming here, you expose yourself to witness a repetition of what you, with such fear, have seen in France within the last three months. Everything here is ripe, and everybody here is prepared, for an insurrection and for an overthrow. The Government is intimidated; the Opposition intriguing; the aristocrats disunited, trembling, and thunderstruck; the patriots firm and active, and the people discontented or disaffected. After this information, go on if you think proper with your plan of coming over here, but do not accuse me afterwards should you repent of your rashness. Your husband is in the right to disapprove it, but he is in the wrong not to convince you of your error. Before you receive this letter I suppose that France is decreed a republic, and of course a govern-

ment fixed, which will possess power enough to put a stop to the anarchy of which you complain *so bitterly*. You will, therefore, have nothing more to dread from what you call a licentious populace, particularly as the most dangerous enemies of liberty and equality are already *removed*. The fate of Louis XVI. and his family cannot long influence or interest the public, since their treason against the nation is, or will soon be, made evident. The foreign armies will never dare to advance so far as Paris; but were they imprudent enough to penetrate so far, they will be cut off to a man, and their ruin be a signal for the Low Countries, for Germany, and for Holland, to join with France and England in annihilating tyranny and establishing universal liberty. I do not speak this from mere suppositions, but from intelligence obtained from various quarters, and of which I have no reason to doubt the authenticity. Should you, notwithstanding, persist in leaving your country, I would advise you to go to Switzerland in preference to England. There you might continue your correspondence with me here, as well as with our friends at Paris, and be, besides, vastly useful in plans of propagating the rights of man on the other side of the Alps, where the friends of liberty are both

numerous and enlightened, and from whom overtures have been made to me that may ultimately be of great consequence to France—but it is not yet the time to disclose them. Consider all these circumstances before you set out; but believe me also sincere when I declare that nobody could be more happy in embracing you than your affectionate friend, who will, in the meantime, have everything ready prepared for your reception here, and who will use every endeavour when you are once here to make your stay as agreeable and *safe* as possible. I do protest that the representations I have urged against your leaving France are dictated entirely by consideration for your happiness and comfort; but you are, and with me always shall be, respected as an independent mistress of your own actions; and my heart, as well as my arms, shall at all times, in all circumstances, and in all countries, be ready to receive you. Try to calm yourself enough to be able before your departure to find out the present situation of parties in France, and whether their rivalry originates in disguised ambition or in misconceived patriotism. Are Petion, Brissot, Condorcet, Roland, Manuel, and the Girondists always united in views? What are the real plans of the Duke of Orleans? He has lately been ill advised, or rather, betrayed; he is dishonoured, and his pre-

tensions irreparably lost. Are not Robespierre, Danton, Sieyes, and Marat now his principal counsellors? or have they only used him and his former rank and property to advance their own interest and to diminish that of their opposers? What is become of La Clos, of Sillery, and of his wife Madame Genlis? have they deserted their patron, or has he disgraced them? To what party are the Generals Dumourier, Luckner, Kellerman, Custine, Biron, Montesquieu, and Dillon attached? What is the opinion of the patriots, of the people, and of the troops concerning these military characters? Do the ministers still act in unison together, or between what parties are they divided? Is there any talk of a new change in the Ministry, and who are supposed to be going out, or who intriguing to get in? How is the public spirit in general? Are emigrations still as numerous to Germany, Switzerland, Italy and Spain as to England? Though most of these queries have already been answered or explained to me by other correspondents, I trust so much to your penetration and judgment, *when not terrified*, that I must hear your sentiments before I am satisfied.

"I entreat you to speak seriously to Petion about my repeated demands of being discharged from all pecuniary transactions with the English patriots.

They worry me almost to death with their excessive and impudent extortions, and deprive me of that composure and serenity which is necessary to transact those other delicate affairs with which I am entrusted. But yesterday I had several fresh proofs of their rapacity and impositions. It had some time ago been agreed in our committees, in hope of encouraging some wealthy friends of open revolution in this country to open their purses, that subscriptions for assisting France in her war against despotism should be advertised as already begun by certain individuals, patriots in our pay, who were to obtain, and who have already obtained from me, the sums subscribed in their names. This manœuvre is not only politic, by convincing the people of France that they have numerous adherents in this country who approve of all the late changes, who support their cause, and who are ready to imitate their example, but also advantageous, in making the patriots here know their friends from their enemies, many persons having come forward who, from their affluent situation in life and high rank in society, were never thought friendly to a *reform* which must subvert all unnatural property as well as level all unnatural distinctions. It disseminates a desire and spirit of innovation

among the lower classes, and diverts the attention of ministers from more serious and dangerous undertakings ripening for a sudden explosion. Thus, had the English patriots acted honestly, no money would have been lost, but much might have been gained by France; I, therefore, did not hesitate to advance to each patriot who waited on me, a smaller or larger sum, according to the recommendation of the executive committee, which he previously presented. Judge, after this, of my surprise when last Saturday morning the treasurer called on me for the payment of these subscriptions, the patriots having only set down names, and pocketed the money. Upon my declaration of what had occurred, he laughed in my face, saying, since that was the case I might look upon the money as gone. As he was obliged to settle his account with the bankers on that day, I could not, without exposing him, or creating suspicion, avoid paying it down again. This immorality is so much the more blamable as—to encourage the lower classes to give their mite to our struggle for liberty—the sums subscribed were purposely small. You may relate this circumstance to Petion, assuring him at the same time that, from what I have seen of these patriots, the riches of France, England, nay, of all Europe, will not be sufficient to gratify their

avidity. When I say *these patriots*, I mean the Scotch and Irish as well as the English. Although they disagree on account of national prejudices, in the chapter of rapacity they are truly brothers. Beaumarchais, who has known the patriots of these islands ever since the American War, makes the same complaints. He thinks their love of money more innate than their love of freedom, or, rather, that they are attached to the latter only because without it they could not satisfy their longing for the former, either in financial, commercial or political speculations.

"From your repeated assertions that this nation is thought the most generous in Europe, having more public establishments to relieve suffering humanity than are found in all other States together, and the only one where real industry and modest merit make their sure way to affluence and advancement, I suppose your ideas of Great Britain either romantic, or that you have swallowed a good dose of the fashionable Anglomania. If no people are more generous, no other people have so many newspapers to make the world acquainted with their generosity; none have more taverns, where the stupid or indolent rich man may pass away some heavy hours of his dull existence, figuring as a bene-

factor at the expense of a few guineas, and gratifying at the same time his ostentation and vanity, his desire of company, or his passion for conviviality. The industrious man, it is true, may claim assistance from some societies encouraging and rewarding his labour and assiduity, but only in the same manner as other societies encourage informers to detect frauds, to prevent swindling, or to pursue house-breakers. As to the advancement of modest merit, here as well as everywhere else, if supported by protectors it may rise; but if too honest to intrigue, or too timid to demand; too elevated to descend to cringing, or too proud to stoop to flattery; too loyal to serve the views of parties, and too patriotic to become the tool of ministers, it will pass a life of expectations, of disappointments, of distress, and of obscurity. Neither my numerous occupations, nor my short residence here, has hitherto enabled me to draw conclusions from my own observations on this subject; I speak, therefore, merely from what I have read. But everybody may be convinced, in perusing the lives of English authors, poets, and other men of genius and eminence, that nowhere has merit been less rewarded, or had more to suffer from neglect, contempt, and poverty. Of those whose works, in doing honour to their country,

have instructed or delighted their contemporaries, many have finished their painful career of *glory* in hospitals or gaols; some have been starved to death; others, more impatient, or preferring a shorter exit, have resorted to poison, or to a halter, to pistols, or to daggers. Do not believe, though I detest this nation, that I am exaggerating. When you come here I shall put books into your hands, wherein you may read the lives of these men. I will afterwards accompany you to Westminster Abbey, where you may admire their epitaphs, and contemplate their monuments. 'Epitaphs! monuments!' you exclaim, 'what a contradiction!' Yes, the very same ungenerous and unfeeling vanity that shortened the existence of these men of merit, paid the sculptor for recording their worth, in hopes of preserving their own worthless names from a total oblivion—for they always take care to have engraved by whom these monuments of tardy national gratitude were erected. Here ignorance, illiberality or arrogance may, therefore, if provided with wealth, purchase at no very dear rate a share of the immortality due to meritorious characters, who had deserved so well of their country, but to whom their countrymen, as well as their country, had refused a morsel of bread, or the common wages bestowed on the mechanic and

day labourer. Suspecting you to have more curiosity to see England than disgust at residing in France, I have entered into all these particulars, in expectation that my complaisance will diminish, if not remove, your anti-patriotic prejudices in favour of this country.—Write to me when the day of your departure from Paris is fixed."

On the 30th of September, the Countess of F——t, accompanied by her son, arrived in England with a pass of the municipality of Paris as Madame Cabanis. It was fortunate for her that she disregarded both the opinion of her husband and the representations of her lover. Notwithstanding what the latter said to the contrary, she would otherwise, in a few months, have ascended the same scaffold with the former.

Having so lately left France, and being provided with so many active and initiated correspondents everywhere, Talleyrand could not plead ignorance of the real situation of affairs in that country. In his letter of the 21st of July—the day he landed at Dover—he declared in positive terms his intention, let the consequences be what they might, not to return during the then unsettled state of parties. His arguments to persuade his mistress to continue at Paris, as his last letter evidently proves, were neither disinterested nor liberal. A surmise subsists, also, that

he was actuated by other motives, too improbable and too shocking to be imputed to any man who had not, like Talleyrand, long renounced all virtuous and honourable sentiments, who, to accomplish his ambitious designs, or to indulge his vicious propensities, had from his youth respected nothing either sacred or respectable. He is stated to have just then formed an acquaintance with a young emigrant lady in London, who, to acquired accomplishments and natural beauty, united some wealth, and had the prospect of possessing still more. If the revolutionary assassins at Paris had, therefore, despatched a lady whom he employed rather as an agent than loved as a mistress, who, when in London, could be of little service in his political plots, who might impede his new intrigue, and, perhaps, one day proffer some claims to his purse, they would have served, instead of distressing him.

Some few days after it was known here that Dumourier had successfully intimidated the late King of Prussia from undertaking any further offensive operations in Champagne, Talleyrand sent Le Brun, the Minister for the Foreign Department in the Executive Council, a confidential letter too interesting not to deserve the serious perusal and consideration of all true Britons. It evinces the same design

to surprise and overcome this country by an invasion before the last war commenced, as since the last Peace of Amiens was concluded. Considering the unprepared and insecure state in which we then were, the numerous revolutionary incendiaries that disseminated anarchical and subversive principles everywhere, the tumultuous behaviour and discontent of the lower classes, and the agitation which Great Britain shared with all other nations of Europe, it was fortunate, indeed, that the insidious and treacherous counsels of Talleyrand had not the same influence in the determination of the National Convention as in those of Bonaparte. This confidential letter is dated London, October 10th, 1792:

"CITIZEN MINISTER,—Permit me to request the favour of you to communicate to the other members of the Executive Council some remarks concerning the real and relative situation of Great Britain and Ireland. I am well aware that many of them have not escaped your wisdom and penetration, or theirs; but, knowing also the numerous and various occupations which must divert and divide your attentions, and being upon the spot, I think it my duty to enter into some details, though my capacity is far from being equal to my patriotism and zeal to serve the cause of liberty and equality.

"That in the British nation the far greater part of the inhabitants call loudly for a reform, and desire a revolution which may establish a commonwealth, is undeniable; but the British patriots possess neither our activity, our disinterestedness, nor our energy, philosophy, or elevated views; and they have not yet been able to acquire, for a support and rallying point, *the majority in the Legislature.* They may, however, and they certainly do, intend to resort to arms in support of their petitions for reform and their attempt to recover their lost liberties. But as long as the strength and resources of the present Government continue unimpaired, they may distress it, and even shake it, but I fear, without aid from France, they will be unable to change or to crush it. The ministers even expect to be reinforced with the interest and talents of all those violent alarmists, terrified or seduced by the eloquent sophistry of the fanatic Edmund Burke, who will add additional weight to the scale of the English aristocracy.

"Everything indicates that the King of England will not long continue his present system of neutrality. All the colonels have lately received orders to hasten the completement of their regiments. Several more ships have just been put into com-

mission. A report is prevalent of the militia being directly called out. Societies against Republicans and levellers are talked of as encouraged by Government, and the ministerial papers are instructed to hold a language insulting to the French Republic and hostile to our present Government. I have also obtained intelligence from a most authentic source, that immediately after the arrival here of a courier from Lord Elgin at Brussels, with the information of the Duke of Brunswick's retreat from Champagne, fast sailing cutters were sent to the East and West Indies with instructions for their respective governors to prepare for hostilities, and, in the meantime, to intrigue with the disaffected in our colonial possessions for their surrender to Great Britain the instant of a rupture being announced.

"Is it, besides, probable that England will remain neutral, without interference, should the efforts and valour of our armies be crowned with success? Or, if encountering defeats, will she not take advantage of our disasters by dividing our spoils with our foes? We have it this moment in our power to command not only the neutrality of Great Britain and Ireland, but, if it be thought politic, to form an offensive and defensive alliance with the English, Scotch and Irish commonwealths, established by our arms and,

therefore, naturally connected with the French Republic by the strongest of all ties—a common interest, a common danger, or a common safety.

"According to the enclosed extracts of the last returns sent to the War Office, the regular troops in England do not amount to 20,000 men complete. Of these 8,000 are in or near London, 1,500 at Portsmouth, 1,800 at Plymouth, 1,100 at Dover, 900 at Chatham, 1,800 at Sheerness, Tilbury Fort, and other places on the banks of the Thames. The remainder are quartered either in some manufacturing towns where insurrections are apprehended, or in the several seaports, and so dispersed that in no part do 1,000 men garrison the same place.

"By the last official return from the executive committee, you see that England alone contains 166,000 registered patriots, of whom 33,600 may be provided with firearms from our depôts, and the remainder in four days armed with pikes. Our travelling agents assure us that, besides these, as many more are ready to declare themselves in our favour were we once landed and able to support them effectually.

"In Scotland there are no more than 9,500 regular troops, of whom 5,000 garrison Edinburgh, where Government apprehend an insurrection during an

approaching fair in the latter part of this month; 2,200 men are quartered at or near Glasgow, and the rest form the garrisons in some small forts or seaports. In the same country the last official return makes the patriots amount to 44,200 registered, and double that number who, from different motives, have not yet dared to declare themselves.

"In Ireland the regular troops amount to 10,400 men, and the registered patriots to 131,500, who expect to be joined by almost every Roman Catholic in the island should anything be undertaken by us for their deliverance from their present oppressive yoke.

"All these encouraging circumstances duly considered, my humble proposal is that our fleet at Toulon, now nearly ready for sea on an expedition in the Mediterranean, after taking on board 20,000 or 25,000 men, and arms for 100,000 more, change its destination, pass the Strait of Gibraltar, and land in Ireland as an ally of the numerous oppressed patriots in that country. These forces are at present more than sufficient to deprive Great Britain for ever of that important island, or, at least, to enable us to keep it as a depôt during the war, and a security for her neutrality in case our attempts to revolutionise her should not meet with an equal success.

"I am, however, not too sanguine in my expressions or expectations when I assert that at this period, even in England and Scotland, we shall meet with less resistance and fewer obstacles than many may suppose, if we are only discreet, prudent, and, above all, *expeditious*.

"At three times in forty-eight hours we may, without opposition, land 50,000 or 60,000 men in twenty or thirty different points, under the names of emigrants, and seize on the principal dockyards, arsenals and naval stations. With the assistance of our numerous secret adherents we may even occupy London itself, and, *what is certain and may be depended upon*, our landing will be the signal for a general revolt. The Government, terrified by invaders from abroad and harassed by insurgents in the bosom of the country, without confidence in its troops or reliance on the fidelity of the people, would never, with its trifling forces, be able at the same time to repel an enemy and quash rebellion.

"Once masters of the principal seaports, with the British navy in our power, we may easily obtain from France what succour we judge necessary. As proclamations in the name of the sovereign people in France as an ally of the sovereign people in Great Britain and Ireland will precede our marches, after

being dispersed at our landing, I cannot be mistaken in my hope of a revolution being effected now in this country much quicker than in 1688. Nay, I am positive that not so many weeks will be required to change this monarchy into a republic as it has required years since the Revolution to produce the same change in France. Even in those regiments on which Government most depends, disaffection has crept in. In the Guards some officers of rank have already openly avowed their attachment to our cause, and among the men a fermentation has been created that must be useful to our views.

"Great Britain has at this time no other Continental allies than Prussia and Holland. From the spirit and patriotism of our troops, and from the abilities of our generals, the bondage of the latter country must soon cease, and its resources, with those we already command, will enable us to prevent the King of Prussia, and all other despots, from assisting the King of England.

"Should, Citizen Minister, this plan obtain the approbation of the Executive Council, no time is to be lost in carrying it into execution and in informing me of its determination, that the patriots here may be prepared to rise at a moment's warning and unite with us in our glorious undertaking of delivering

the world from the double tyranny of religion and monarchy.

"But if, unfortunately, any unforeseen or, to me, unknown reasons or impediments prevail to prevent it from being carried into effect, pardon me when I fear that centuries will elapse before another such opportunity offers to France to seize on Ireland, to invade England and Scotland, and with their riches and power maintain an undisturbed sway over the universe, in proclaiming a universal republic.

"Health and fraternity,

(Signed) "CH. M. TALLEYRAND."[1]

Thus this unprincipled man, now Bonaparte's confidential counsellor, advised, and even entreated the invasion of this country during the period of a most profound peace, notwithstanding that our Government, with its usual liberal policy—disregarding the daily provocations of French revolutionists—had just then, by filling their granaries, saved them from starving, and by permitting our manufactories to

1 See *Les Intrigues du Ch. M. Talleyrand* (Neufchâtel, 1801), p. 124, &c.; and *La Faction d'Orléans Démasquée*, p. 104, &c. The author of the last publication states that it was with the permission of Collot d'Herbois that he copied this confidential letter in the archives of the Committee of Public Safety. It is mentioned in the Act of Accusation against the Brissot faction, October, 1793.

supply their arsenals with arms, enabled them to resist and repulse the combined forces of Austria, Prussia, and the emigrants! The treacherous olive-branch of peace held out by revolutionary Frenchmen is more to be dreaded by all loyal Britons than their armed banditti encamped *quietly* opposite our shores, and their armed flotillas flying along their own coast. It is a cruel truth, that "as long as France is tyrannised by revolutionary usurpers, the only and exclusive safety of the British Empire is in war."

This confidential letter, according to Talleyrand's desire, was laid before the Executive Council by Le Brun. After long discussion, it was communicated to the Diplomatic and Military Committees, together with the opinions of each minister. Thomas Paine and other English patriots then at Paris were consulted by the members of the committees, but "were against all foreign succour to establish liberty and equality in Great Britain and Ireland, the native friends of freedom being very numerous there, and more than sufficiently strong of themselves to erect a republic on the ruins of monarchy." Carnot, then a member of the Military Committee, warmly recommended the adoption of Talleyrand's proposal, and even drew a plan for the intended invasion of these islands. He was, however, overruled by the majority,

upon a declaration of the Diplomatic Committee that it was so certain of a revolution in this country within six months that it was then negotiating an offensive and defensive treaty with the leading patriots of England, Scotland and Ireland. In 1794, when Thomas Paine, from a worthy representative of the French people, became a prisoner, with all other British subjects in France, his sentiments, on this occasion, were made the grounds of an accusation, prepared against this infamous traitor, as high treason against the cause of liberty and equality, "which the gold of Pitt had bribed him to desert." Had Robespierre reigned some few weeks longer, regicide Frenchmen would have punished this outlawed rebel for his treason against England.

In another letter to Le Brun, of the 15th of November, Talleyrand *deplores* that this his proposal had not been accepted. He suspects some of the English patriots of infidelity, and others of being lukewarm or terrified, as the English Government had caught the alarm, and were preparing extensive *defensive* measures against the friends of liberty. He declines the offer of being accredited abroad as a public diplomatic agent of the French Commonwealth, being convinced *that he could be of more service were his name upon the list of proscribed emigrants* than were it

to appear officially as employed and trusted by the Government of this country. Nowhere could he be of greater utility than in Great Britain, but then he must reside there as an emigrant, and as a person disaffected and disgraced, who neither can nor will return to France during a republic. He desires, therefore, that a decree of banishment may, under some pretext or other, be pronounced against him by the National Convention. He concludes with declaring that, if the English patriots continued their present inactivity for a month to come, all their future efforts will be vain, the aristocrats of rank as well as of property beginning to rally with cordiality round the throne.

In the following month, according to Talleyrand's desire, an Act of Accusation was decreed against him by the National Convention, and his name was placed amongst those of the loyal emigrants. The discovery of this intrigue explains the reasons both of his past equivocal conduct and of his present elevation.

The female emigrant, already mentioned, with whom Talleyrand had formed an intrigue that augmented his chagrin on the arrival of the Countess of F——t in this country, was no other than his present wife, then residing here as Madame Grand. Concerning this lady, Lieutenant Nath. Belchier, of the

Royal Navy, has favoured the author with the following interesting circumstances, inserted here in the very words of this gallant and loyal officer:

"In August, 1792, after the massacre of the 10th, Madame Grand made her escape from France, after seeing her porter, a Swiss, murdered under her windows. In her flight she left everything to the mercy of the Republicans, and landed at Dover with her maid, a few changes of linen, and not more than a dozen louis d'or in her pocket. It was in this place I became acquainted with the lady and her misfortunes, and learned that the national seal had been fixed on her property and placed at the disposal of the nation.

"Madame Grand had been married to a Mr. Grand, an Englishman, in the East Indies, but from some serious disagreement had parted without a divorce. It was, therefore, thought possible that her claims as a British subject might be attended to, and the seals taken off. On this errand, a Mr. O'Dwyer and myself set off for Paris, invested with full powers by Madame Grand, at a time when strangers of every nation were leaving it as fast as possible. Luckily for the object of our mission, the name of an Englishman was then a passport of protection through France, and my then situation in

the English navy, though but that of a midshipman, I believe was of service. However, after some trouble the seals were removed from her house in the Rue de Mirabeau, Section de Mirabeau,[1] from her cabinet, escritoire, &c., &c., and we were desired to inform her that she might return without being called to account for her flight. This was not enough. It was not the intention of Madame Grand to return, but to get as many of her effects into England as possible, and to remain there until affairs might take a turn in her favour. We therefore resolved, at any risk, and in the face of a decree denouncing under penalty of death any person found transporting the current coin or plate out of the Republic above the value of £4, to save for her the whole of her portable property. On the 19th of September, about seven o'clock, we left Paris with her plate, mostly gold, valued at £3,300; jewels, at £12,500; besides £2,100 secured in belts about our persons, and actions or demands on the Caisse d'Escompte for £8,000 more, which, I should suppose, were of but little use. After much trouble and constant danger

1 This street and section was called so after Mirabeau, who died there. It has since had other names after other popular revolutionary brigands, but it is now named Rue de Mont Blanc, Section de Mont Blanc, in commemoration of the seizure of Savoy *in time of peace*.

of being discovered, we arrived on the 25th, with the whole, at Dover, and delivered to Madame Grand the wreck of her fortunes, refusing every pecuniary recompense whatever, she paying our expenses only, which amounted to about £60. I can lay my hand on my heart and say that the part of this business I undertook was from no other motive than that of rescuing a beautiful, suffering Royalist from distress; and, though at that time not possessed of £10 in the world, I rejected every offer of reward, thinking I had a sufficient one in the contemplation of what I had done I was then about twenty-one years of age.

"Madame Grand honoured us with two other commissions equally dangerous. The first was to call on Madame Champion, then living concealed in Boulogne at a hairdresser's in the Rue de Capucin, to enquire if she had any commands for Paris. This lady gave us letters for her husband, the ex-minister, then outlawed by the Convention and a price set upon his head. We visited him in his hiding-place, and received papers from him for Madame Champion. Though utter strangers, I am proud to say he seemed conscious we would not betray him; it was enough that we were Englishmen. The second, which we had likewise the good fortune to accom

plish, was to assist the escape of Madame Grand's friend, Madame Villmain, from Abbeville. We disguised her in sailor's clothes, and conducted her safely to England; but I am sorry to say this lady soon after returned to France, in hopes of sending from thence assistance to her friends at Coblentz, when she was detected and guillotined."

In the summer of 1798, the author was released from prison in France, where he had gone to claim his property, which had been sequestered since the war. He was then often invited by Madame Grand to her villa near Montmorency, twelve miles from Paris. Here he met Talleyrand and most of the foreign ambassadors to the late Court of Luxembourg, and, as a curious coincidence, intending to go to England, was asked by this lady, who had procured him a pass from a neutral minister, to bring over with him *on his return back* to France these very jewels and other valuables that Lieutenant Belchier had, with so much risk and disinterestedness, saved in 1792, but which were then deposited in the Bank of England. His voyage was prevented by a new imprisonment, and, of course, he could not oblige Madame Grand, who frequently declared that "the debauchee Talleyrand was the last person upon earth she should like for a husband."

While Talleyrand was thus intriguing with women in England, and plotting with rebels in France, his Sovereign and benefactor, Louis XVI., after enduring accumulated horrors in the dungeons of the Temple, was, after a mock trial, barbarously sent to the scaffold by the regicides of the National Convention. Such was the end of the best and most virtuous King that ever reigned over the depraved French people. His character has been justly descanted on in the most glowing colours by his affectionate subjects, and no part of their eulogies is deficient of foundation. Even most of his enemies, in the midst of a studied system of calumny, have been obliged to acknowledge his virtues. His whole conduct proves that he had no fear for himself; his only terrors arose from the probability of shedding the blood of his subjects in civil war. His constancy and resignation from the time his trial commenced till the moment which terminated his existence, forms a picture of excellence almost surpassing humanity, and demonstrates the transcendent benefits of that religious purity which takes the sense of shame from premeditated ignominy, which deprives cruelty of its venom, and death of its sting.

On the 23rd of January, 1793, the murder of the King of France was known in London, and Talleyrand,

with all other loyal men, put on mourning, and pretended to shed crocodile's tears. The following letter written to Le Brun on the same day, at six o'clock in the evening, shows how sincere his affliction was:

"The death of Capet has overwhelmed George with terror, his ministers with fear, and the aristocrats with consternation, whilst the patriots rejoice that the world is plagued with one tyrant less. According to your desire, Citizen Minister, I shall cause to be inserted in the *Argus* and in the *Courier* those articles which you sent me; and my agents are already ordered to disseminate that the tyrant's artificial firmness in his last moments was the consequence of hope being held out to him of being respited on the scaffold, or that the people would not suffer his execution. A grand Council of State is convoked for to-morrow, and I am informed that the question of peace or war will then be decided. I am glad that you approve of Chauvelin's official correspondence. If we can only cause the British Government to be regarded as aggressors, we have left a door open for the Opposition to perplex ministers with their attacks and reproaches, and for the patriots to keep up the spirit of disaffection and mutiny among the people, and even to increase it on account of the new burdens which new expenses must require. It was, however, fortunate for us that

we have been able to embroil matters so far that it will be a difficult task, even for the most profound and able statesman, to find out on what part of the laws of nations these acts were considered as equivalent to a declaration of war. I was more than once afraid that, in answer to our protest against the Alien Bill, ministers would have said that such a Bill in fact existed in France these last four years, as since the Revolution no British subject was safe in travelling in France if not provided with a pass, contrary to the Treaty of Commerce of 1786; fortunately they either did not know, or forgot this circumstance.[1]

"Thanks to the decree against me, I am now well received everywhere, even among those who lately would hardly speak to me. With all other

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1 That this article of the Commercial Treaty was violated as early as in July, 1789, the author can prove by a pass for himself and five servants, who, with him, were British subjects. It is signed by La Fayette, as Governor of Paris, and by De la Salle, the second in command, and dated July 21st. Intending to visit an estate in the south of France, La Fayette advised him not to set out without this patent of French liberty, which he was obliged to exhibit no less than eighty-four times between Paris and Avignon. In descending the River Saône, from Chalons to Lyons, he saw fourteen chateaux in flames, one of them belonging to Count de Perigord, Talleyrand's uncle; and on its banks the patriotic incendiaries were, with *sang-froid*, dividing the plate and other spoils. Several English families were detained in Burgundy and Dauphiny for want of passes.

defenders and avengers of the throne and altar, I intend to put on mourning, to pray, to sigh, and even to weep with them, should it be necessary and possible. This pantomime my enemies in France, who are not in our secrets, will, no doubt, regard as a real and natural performance. I trust, therefore, to your friendship and patriotism to explain to the members of the Executive Council and of the committees, my behaviour, in a manner that I may not fall a victim to my endeavours to serve the friends of liberty and equality. Should Chauvelin be forced to quit this country, depend upon it my zeal and patriotism shall always remain the same and uninterrupted. As, however, he is rather indiscreet, I should wish, Citizen Minister, that you would seriously inform him of the consequences, and, if you mistrust him, even cause him to be shut up in solitary confinement, at least as long as I am to reside in this country. I continue always in the same opinion: without any signal defeat of their countrymen, the patriots here will have a better chance of succeeding during a peace than during a war. Should, therefore, the latter be at present inevitable, let us make it as short as possible.

"This letter is private and confidential, from a friend to his friend, not from a secret agent to

a minister in place. Have, therefore, the goodness to destroy it after its perusal.

"Health and fraternity,

(Signed) "CH. M. TALLEYRAND.

"P.S.—Late last night we received some intelligence which made us detain the messenger for twenty-four hours. You will now see by Chauvelin's official despatch, that he is ordered to depart from England before the 1st of next month. This decisive step evinces that the English Cabinet is determined upon war, and that ministers are acquainted with the danger of a longer peace. May we not still contrive some means to prevent hostilities, and at least to gain time? Command me at all times and on all occasions.

"London, January 24th, 1793.

(Signed) "CH. M. T."

The gloom and consternation which overspread Paris on the perpetration of the greatest of national crimes, was increased by the shutting of the barriers, and a domiciliary visit, so rigorously executed that six thousand persons were reported to have been arrested as emigrants. The people saw themselves about to plunge into a general and unfounded war with all Europe, while no adequate pretence of

injury or promise of advantage was held out to them as a motive. Great efforts were made to render Brissot and the war faction popular, yet the other party did not venture to exhibit a promise of peace, but, on the contrary, seemed inclined to cover France with blood, and the rest of Europe with ruin. The inhabitants could not but feel that their ease and property were sacrificed by individuals whom they did not respect, to schemes which they did not comprehend, and which did not promise either success or advantage. Yet the citizens at Paris were quiet, and exhibited the stupefaction of extreme terror, not daring even to express grief at the crimes that defaced their country; overawed by a few bold brigands, who insulted, enchained and robbed them while they boasted of restoring freedom, and taught the people, from whom every other exclamation would have been treason, to shout in praise of liberty and equality, amidst beggary, famine, gaols and scaffolds. War without was eagerly sought; anarchy and rebellion raised their heads in the departments; and in the Convention opposition was conducted with the avowed design of bringing the vanquished party to an ignominious death.

In the recent conquest of Austrian Flanders and

Belgium by Dumourier, the neutral governments of Europe could discern no cause for hostility. The incursion was not even sufficiently alarming to forbid an expectation that the Emperor would be able in another campaign to recover the territory so suddenly wrested from him; but the attitude of France towards the conquered people excited sensations widely different. To possess a country in a military manner was usual, and could occasion no complaint; but the novelty of pretending, in right of conquest, to emancipate the sworn subjects of a throne from their oath of allegiance, to change their political relation by conferring on them new rights, of which they could not be deprived, even in the event of their being reconquered—these were innovations in the received customs of warfare, and contrary to the laws of nations, that gave alarm and rendered governments who were not disposed to hostility jealous and terrified, lest the system of unprovoked aggression should be extended to them, and the new project of calling on subjects to revolt and change their form of government, under the protection of French arms, put in practice to their destruction. Great Britain had, from the beginning of the Revolution, kept cautiously aloof from every connection which could engender suspicion or create a probability of a war with

France; and, at the time of Lord Gower's quitting Paris, the unequivocal declaration of the minister Le Brun, in the name of the Executive Council, proved the equity of her conduct. That of the French, on the contrary, had in many trifling points been replete with circumstances of offence, which a jealous nation or captious administration might have inflamed into causes for war; but the British Government, instead of strengthening the means of hostility, disbanded part of its forces both by sea and land, and reduced the taxes. The King, in compliance with the wishes of the French Government, forbade all his officers from entering into the service of the allies, and used every other exertion consistent with his dignity to evince his good faith in the maintenance of neutrality. Did any previous doubt exist, Talleyrand's correspondence has removed it, in evincing clearly that the English Government was, notwithstanding, beset with the very arts and means which had been employed to overthrow the throne of France. Clubs were formed with executive and corresponding committees, professedly for legal, but indisputably for revolutionary purposes; emissaries in French pay were travelling round the country propagating anarchical principles; seditious publications were disseminated with art and activity; and it was found necessary, on the 21st of

May, 1792, to issue a proclamation for restraining these attempts against our Constitution.

While the predominating party in France could not but perceive the solicitude of the British Government on this subject, and while the most violent of their revolutionary rulers acknowledged the upright conduct of the British Administration, every encouragement and liberal pecuniary succours were afforded to those whose principles and behaviour were hostile to the Cabinet of St. James's. Every deputation recommended or paid by Talleyrand, or breathing sentiments destructive of the British Constitution, was hailed with triumph, and complimented as the *sound* part of the nation; while British subjects, noted only for their hatred and treachery to their native Government, were sought out and acknowledged as French citizens, and selected as the fittest to occupy places in the National Convention. So active was the impulse given by these and other more clandestine—though no less effectual—encouragements to seditions in all parts of the British Empire, that the King was under the necessity to convoke Parliament at an earlier period than he had originally intended, to call out the militia, and adopt other measures for the internal defence of the kingdom. The decree of the 19th of November, 1792, holding

out the protecting hand of France to insurgents of all nations, and the application of it ostentatiously made to Great Britain by the favourable reception of deputations of English rebels negotiating for French fraternity, indicated with indisputable precision the inimical views and treacherous plots of all parties in France against our country. To these numerous acts of indirect hostility against Great Britain were added direct attacks on her ally. When Dumourier had completed the conquest of the Austrian Netherlands, the National Convention decreed the invasion of that part of Flanders belonging to the neutral States of Holland, and the prosecution of a war against that unoffend ing country was one of the ostensible views of this General's late visit to Paris. As the politics of the Dutch were divided between the contending influences of an English and a French party, strenuous remonstrances were necessary from the British Ambassador to excite a spirit of resistance against French aggression, favourable to the liberty of both countries, and consistent with ancient as well as recent treaties. Meanwhile, active proceedings were adopted in the Convention and in the French clubs to inflame the public mind against Great Britain. Haughty enquiries were made respecting the political

tendency of Acts passed by the British Parliament, for enabling the Government to insure its tranquillity by dismissing suspicious foreigners from its shores, and to restrain the devices for involving its commercial credit with that of France, by prohibiting the circulation of assignats. The hostile intentions of France could no longer be denied by any true Briton, nor could the Cabinet of St. James's mistake the source of those internal agitations which were instigated and kept up in many parts and threatened the welfare of the State. The most respectable persons in the metropolis expressed to Government both their fears and their devotion to the cause of the country; and at length, our patient endurance being exhausted, Chauvelin, the unaccredited representative of French regicides, was ordered to quit the kingdom. The National Convention did not, however, await the intelligence of this event before they carried their hostile intentions into effect. In this single object both parties in this assembly cordially joined; and on the 1st of February a long and calumnious report by Brissot was followed by a unanimous decree that the French Republic was at war with the King of England and the Stadtholder of the United Provinces. Consistently with the insidious form of this declaration, and according to Talleyrand's advice, in order

to afford the factious in each country a pretext to believe that the people were precipitated into a war against their interests, and merely to gratify the ambition of their rulers, a mockery of negotiation was practised by sending emissaries and intriguers to England, who demanded to be received as agents of the French Government, though furnished with no authentic credentials, nor invested with any efficient power.

On the 29th of January, 1793, Talleyrand wrote again to Le Brun:

"This, Citizen Minister, will in all probability be the last letter you can receive from me in a direct way, as I am informed by one of our agents that, notwithstanding my mourning, the English ministers both watch and suspect me. In the Privy Council, which determined the order for Chauvelin's leaving this country, it was discussed whether this order was not to extend even to me, as moved by the privy counsellors of the alarmists' party, who continue the fanatical and irreconcilable foes of all French patriots. Fortunately, Pitt and Grenville declared for an adjournment, on account of my proscription in France, and from being informed by several respectable emigrants that I 'sincerely repented of the part I had taken in the Revolution.'

Yet my situation is critical, and you cannot be too careful in writing to me. I do not think it safe, as you propose, to trust any longer to the Countess of F——t, nor wish you to go on with our correspondence under her cover, she being at this moment jealous of some other connections I have formed, and the British Government cannot be unacquainted with our mutual attachment at Paris. I shall always write to you under the name you mention, to the care of the house of Maetzlars at Frankfort, or to Madame La Roche[1] in Switzerland. You may, at least once in a month, send me your orders addressed to Madame Grand, whose friendship I possess, and who is too stupid (*trop bête*) to suspect anything. Besides this and the four addresses Chauvelin and I have agreed to, and which he will communicate to you, you may direct letters to Thomas Smith, Esq., Cannon Coffee-house, Jermyn Street; or to Signor Sellini, Orange Coffee-house, Haymarket.

"I have now changed all the houses and places of rendezvous where I hitherto saw the English patriots and heard the reports of my agents; among the former I continue to see and correspond only with three, their principal leaders—one for England,

1 In *Les Intrigues du Ch. M. Talleyrand*, &c., p. 152, it is stated that this lady's real name was Rochechouart.

one for Scotland and one for Ireland; of the latter, Audibert and several others have, since the Alien Bill, already been ordered out of this country, and I employ now, no more than five, of whom three are natives, besides the Prussian Counsellor of Legation,[1] who is sincerely a friend of France and an enemy of Great Britain. Reduced as you find the establishment, yet the expenses are increased, as I am obliged to take so many precautions, to pay largely, and at a higher rate than before; having also, to avoid suspicion, taken a house at Kensington, where expenses are higher than in London, but where, at the same time, my actions may, as I desire, be more easily inspected by the spies set about me. These are the principal causes of the great credit I have asked for on bankers at Hamburg, Frankfort and Basle; but, Citizen Minister, you may rest assured that the strictest economy shall, on my part, be observed with the money of the nation, and nothing be squandered away un-

1 *Les Intrigues du Ch. M. Talleyrand, &c.*, p. 160. This Prussian Counsellor's name is Theremin. After being a spy here during the war, when peace was signed between Prussia and France he went to Paris and wrote a libel against this country, for which he was made a French citizen. The Directory employed him to embroil the States of Wurtemburg with their Prince; and Bonaparte made him, in 1799, a Prefect.

necessarily. Beaumarchais has refused me any further advances until his accounts are settled by the Executive Council, having, as he says, laid out in purchase of arms for the patriots and our troops £25,000 more than he had credit for, and on which account he is much distressed by his creditors here; he writes to the Minister of the War Department on this same occasion.

"The zeal, though not the number, of patriots here increases, and almost every day the Press evinces their activity. They suppose still that they may produce a revolution without foreign assistance, but they are also convinced of their error in not pressing last October the acceptance of the plan I then had the honour of presenting to you. As I suggested, they have now agreed to unite the cry for peace with that of liberty, and to inspire everywhere, and by all means in their power, a wish to see an end of this unnatural war. In this they are ably supported by some members of the Opposition, who, perhaps from different motives, try to make the war unpopular in hopes of turning out the ministers, and of succeeding them. The spirit among the troops is not quite so favourable to our designs as three months ago, but some severe defeats will soon change it, although the removal of several

patriotic officers has certainly hurt the cause of liberty in the army."

Talleyrand continued to correspond with Le Brun, and to inform him of the success of his intrigues and plots in this country, until this minister shared the disgrace of the other members of the Brissotine faction. The credit on several foreign houses was then withdrawn, and the Committee of Public Safety considered him in no other light than as an emigrant. His correspondence with the Countess of F——t was then published, and even his official or confidential letters to Le Brun were shown in the National Convention, and were permitted to be copied by several persons, who have since printed them. This impolitic behaviour of the members of the committee originated from the enmity of one of them, Collot d'Herbois (formerly a strolling player), who suspected Talleyrand of having prevented Louis XVI. from appointing him a Minister of Justice in 1791, a place for which he was then insolently a candidate. That our Government had no knowledge of Talleyrand's perfidy is judged from their permitting him still to reside here. The accusations and denunciations of the French Jacobins against pretended agents of Pitt at Paris were, therefore, either false, or the British Ministry were not faithfully served by them. The female

intriguer, Madame La Roche, who was then at Lausanne, obtained, however, regularly from him some *gratuitous* intelligence, which she communicated to Carnot, who afterwards favoured his return to France and his promotion by the Directory. Even when, in 1794, he was sent away from England, and went to America, he did not cease writing to her. Among other papers procured by him that accompanied his petition to be struck out of the list of emigrants was a certificate of civism, signed by this woman.

When Talleyrand heard of the arrest of Le Brun, he immediately employed out of the secret service money a sum sufficient to purchase, at Amsterdam, American stock to the amount of 150,000 dollars. Fearing that the jealousy, hatred and mistrust of the victorious faction would get the better of their policy, he took care to rob the plunderers in France sufficiently to live independently in America should any discovery force him from Great Britain. Though possessing, besides this money, several large sums deposited under different names in our Funds, he used the Countess of F——t with ingratitude perfectly suitable to his selfish and cruel character. By the murder of her husband, this lady had lost all her property and all hope of any assistance from France. Thus circumstanced, and having, besides herself, *their*

son to support, she justly addressed herself to him for some part of what was due to her for former pecuniary sacrifices. With his usual artful hypocrisy, he wished to persuade her that, by unsuccessful speculations and gambling in our Funds, he was nearly ruined. Either from a thorough knowledge of his unfeeling heart, or from a real belief in his false assertion, she applied no more to him, but to her own talents, and wrote a novel called "Adèle de Senange," which, by a generous subscription among the English nobility and gentry, produced her five hundred guineas. When Talleyrand had sailed for America, she intended to reside, for economy, in Switzerland, and for that purpose went over to Holland. In August, 1794, the compiler, just released from a French prison, met her by accident at Utrecht. There she related to him the above particulars and that she had passed several weeks at Brille, where she had been recommended to the English Agent. She spoke in high terms of the English nation, and of the delicacy which attended the generosity of the higher classes of this country in their behaviour towards the emigrants. She repeated several anecdotes on this subject; among others, one which occurred during her stay at Brille. Being invited to dine one day at the English Agent's, she

found there, among other persons of distinction, Lord Elgin, and the Earl and Countess of Besborough. The Agent, not the most refined in his sentiments, treated her, indeed, hospitably; but it was easy to observe, and she felt that he was acquainted with her penurious situation. This could not escape the penetrating eye and the noble mind of the amiable Lady Besborough, who, when sitting down to dinner, insisted upon the Countess of F——t taking the place of honour, which had been marked for and offered to her by the Agent. This tender, but at the same time expressive politeness, had the desired effect. From that day more regard was shown the unfortunate wanderer, so much the more consoling to her as the progress of the French arms detained her longer in Holland than she first intended, and obliged her finally to retire to Altona, near Hamburg, instead of continuing her journey to Switzerland. How easy it is for those whose birth and affluence have never been insulted or injured by the savage hands of rebellion, to confer comfort on those who have nothing left of their birth but a rank they cannot support, or of their affluence but a remembrance of property they expect never more to possess! To truly honourable minds not yet sunk to a level with their circumstances, the delicate politeness of the

Countess of Besborough must be preferable to any pecuniary gift she had in her power to bestow. What money can relieve a heart pierced with the poisonous arrow of contempt, while suffering unmerited misery?

When Talleyrand was ordered to quit England,[1] his first accomplices, La Fayette, the two brothers La Methes, and La Tour Maubourg were confined at Olmutz, in Bohemia, or at Spandau, in Prussia. In every part of Europe the Constitutional rebels were as much detested by all loyal men as the Jacobin regicides. He had, therefore, no other alternative left than to cross the Atlantic. Some other of those traitors who, in 1789, revolted against their King, had since, in the name of the sovereign people, been proscribed by the Jacobins, and, to save their lives and preserve their ill-gotten wealth, had emigrated and settled themselves in the United States of America. He found there, in consequence, a number of his former associates, with whom he immediately entered into an association for reforming

1 When Talleyrand left this country, he pretended to be in great distress. He sold his library, and borrowed money for his voyage. This is, however, a common manœuvre of French spies. Mehée de la Touche caused himself to be arrested and sent to Newgate for ten guineas, at a time when he, according to his own avowal, possessed a credit for £1,200.

and regenerating that country, after the manner of France. Fortunately for the citizens of America, their Presidents, at this period, were enlightened patriots, and not fanatical revolutionists—too independent to suffer themselves to be seduced by the stolen gold of French emissaries, too penetrating to be deluded by the sophistry of French intriguers, and too loyal to approve innovations which, in bringing certain wretchedness on present generations, leave behind them no prospect of any advantage to posterity. Talleyrand and the other revolutionary propagators were, therefore, warned to desist from their attempts, if they wished to avoid that punishment the law inflicted on conspirators. The overthrow of Robespierre, of which information then arrived, more than the admonitions of the Government, made them cease their revolutionary manœuvres in America, to turn their thoughts and schemes again towards Europe.

A treaty between England and America, at the period of Talleyrand's arrival, was negotiating. His former hatred against this country had almost increased to rage by the late order he received to depart. He, therefore, employed all his political talents to retard its progress, and all his art and machiavelism to prevent a fortunate issue. He had

frequent intercourse with Mr. Jefferson, and several other Americans who occupied situations under Government, or who were members of the two Houses of the States—men, either attached to the French Republic from principle, or bought over by gold, or whose unnatural malevolence towards Great Britain was so illiberal and impolitic as to prefer risking the ruin and destruction of the honour and prosperity of their country by adopting the revolutionary policy of France, to its glory, advantage, preservation and safety in concluding a treaty with England. As he announced and presented himself everywhere as the bosom friend of La Fayette, to whom many Americans believed themselves in some measure indebted for their independence, he succeeded in his intrigues against this Empire to a much greater extent than could have been expected from a proscribed emigrant, and one who was despised throughout Europe. If he failed in his wishes by the treaty being carried through, signed, and ratified, he created, however, great opposition in its different stages, and threatened that, whenever he should have any influence in the French councils, the Americans should repent of their imprudence and obstinacy, as he could prove that this Act was contrary to treaties already subsisting with France—a

threat he took care some years afterwards to have carried into effect, by the seizure of American vessels and property to an immense amount.

After the death of Robespierre, the surviving members of the Constitutional and Orleans faction, who mostly resided in or near Hamburg, united their talents and machinations to change the French Republic into a constitutional monarchy. They invited Talleyrand to join them in their labours, which he did the more willingly, as he disliked the Americans as much as he detested the English. In July, 1795, he landed on the banks of the Elbe, where he found, and was hailed by, the brothers La Methes, the Duke of Aiguillon, General Valence, Madame Genlis, and some other of his former accomplices. They instituted a revolutionary committee, having for its object to extend the horrors of the French Rebellion to Great Britain, Ireland, and the North of Europe, in a manner that, when they returned to France, where they hoped to rule quickly under a constitutional king of their own making, the convulsed state of other nations would prevent their tranquillity from being interrupted by domestic rivals, and their usurped authority from being attacked by enemies from abroad. Talleyrand seemed sincerely to enter into all their views, and was entrusted by them to

Cipher of Marie Antoinette

This curious cipher which was used by the Queen in corresponding with her Italian relations is fully described by the Princess Lamballe in her Memoirs of the Royal Family of France. The key-word used must be known by both of the parties corresponding in cipher. The subject is written down and above it, the key-word is repeated over and over, as shown below.

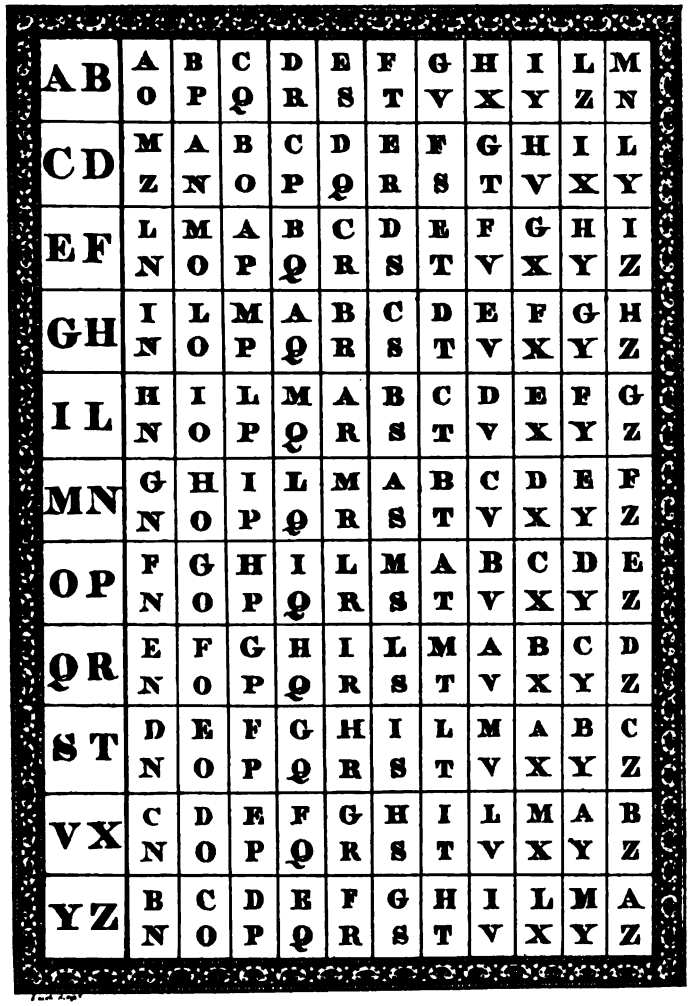
Key.	Lodov Icolodo
Subject.	Maria Antonia

Then in the first alphabet of the large initals of the cipher the letter L must be sought and on the transversal line, being traced for M it will be found in the same square with Q, which must be set down, then in the large initial look for O, and A will be found in the small square with T. Proceed in the same manner with each letter of the key and subject and the result will be Q. T. E.

Q. Y. R. A. A. I. F. X. T.

On receiving this the other correspondent exactly reverses the method pursued in writing the cipher, using the large L and the Q to get the M, etc.

Chapter 12 Matrix Algebra



AB	A O	B P	C Q	D R	E S	F T	G V	H X	I Y	L Z	M N
CD	M Z	A N	B O	C P	D Q	E R	F S	G T	H V	I X	L Y
EF	L N	M O	A P	B Q	C R	D S	E T	F V	G X	H Y	I Z
GH	I N	L O	M P	A Q	B R	C S	D T	E V	F X	G Y	H Z
IL	H N	I O	L P	M Q	A R	B S	C T	D V	E X	F Y	G Z
MN	G N	H O	I P	L Q	M R	A S	B T	C V	D X	E Y	F Z
OP	F N	G O	H P	I Q	L R	M S	A T	B V	C X	D Y	E Z
QR	E N	F O	G P	H Q	I R	L S	M T	A V	B X	C Y	D Z
ST	D N	E O	F P	G Q	H R	I S	L T	M V	A X	B Y	C Z
VX	C N	D O	E P	F Q	G R	H S	I T	L V	M X	A Y	B Z
YZ	B N	C O	D P	E Q	F R	G S	H T	I V	L X	M Y	A Z

correspond with Barras and other leading members of the National Convention. He acted, however, with them, as he had already done with Louis XVI., Orleans, and Petion. He served them as long as he could serve himself by it, but deserted them the instant his connection with them was no longer profitable to his purse or alluring to his ambition. On the 2nd of September a memorial was presented to the Convention, in which he enumerates "his great achievements in the cause of liberty and equality, and demands, therefore, to have the decree of accusation against him cancelled, and his name struck off the list of emigrants, as both these acts took place in consequence of his *own desire*, to be so much the more useful in his secret mission in London." His petition was taken under consideration, and assented to on the 4th of September; but he was the only member of the Revolutionary Committee of the North to whom this assembly conceded such a favour.

He was happy to see his former friend, the Countess of F——t, who still resided at Altona; but she received him, as he merited, with a silent coolness, which mortified his vanity and presumption more than he would have been humiliated by deserved upbraiding, destitute as he was of all honourable sentiments. The Countess treated him no other

than as a disagreeable intruder or a common visitor. Upon his enquiry after *their* son, she answered, in the presence of several persons, "Sir, you never had a wife! and a mistress becoming a mother by you, in loving her child, must abhor his father. When once really known, you can inspire no other sentiments than those of abhorrence." With his usual presence of mind, he addressed himself to the company: "My friends," said he, "do not be alarmed; this is only a severe fit of jealousy, and these fits, you know, neither kill women nor are disagreeable to men."

Among persons to whom he had been introduced since his arrival in Germany, was the Baron de S——, married to a beautiful niece of the Prince de H——, who had sent her, in the beginning of the Revolution, to France, to be educated there under the inspection of Madame Genlis.[1] If her French education had not improved her notions of moral duties, her husband, by the lessons of German

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1 Madame Genlis has been rather unfortunate with her pupils. Everybody at Paris knows the *pure* life of her daughter, Madame Valence; her [niece De Sarcy, married to Mr. Mathieson, was divorced from him to marry her gallant; Mademoiselle de L., married to the Marquis St. P., had three children during his emigration; and did Pamela make her husband happy? See *Mon Sejour en Allemagne* (Basle, 1800), p. 49, *note*.

sophists—his instructors—had also imbibed principles as dangerous to society as they were incompatible with the happiness of individuals. Ambitious, but not interested, motives guided him when he concluded this marriage. Possessing a princely fortune, his vanity was flattered in being able to boast of a wife related to a Prince of one of the first houses in Germany. Of this he informed his lady on their wedding-day, and added that, as he desired not to be interrupted in his future intercourse with persons of her sex, so he left her at perfect liberty to choose the company of those gentlemen who were most agreeable to her inclinations. She was not quite eighteen when she heard such language from her husband, who, the next day, presented her, as a playfellow, a Prussian sub-lieutenant of her own age, the natural son of a nobleman in the vicinity. Thus circumstanced, if she fell a victim to seduction, she was previously the victim of imprudence, of neglect, and of indifference. Although her frailties are not to be commended, the conduct of her husband is unpardonable. Had he encouraged in her sentiments of virtue, she might have continued a life of chastity. His guilt is evident; hers, the moralist will deplore, and the Christian pity and forgive.

Her intrigue with this young officer was no secret,

and when delivered of a daughter she ingenuously told everybody that he was the father, even in the presence of her husband, who did not appear offended. Before she had the misfortune of Talleyrand's acquaintance, this was the sole instance of any improper connections or irregularities of which she was accused. Her genius was as justly celebrated as her beauty was admired; but her foible was to prefer the praise conferred on the eminence of the former to the compliments bestowed on the perfection of the latter. This weak side was soon discovered by this veteran seducer, who took advantage of it, to his disgrace, but to her perdition. She had a select library, where he requested and obtained free admittance. He there wrote in her favourite book—Rousseau's "Eloisa"—some flattering verses, which she answered; and, as he expected, an amorous intrigue was the conclusion of a literary correspondence. Not content with gaining her affection, he determined to tyrannise over her inclinations; and, what is most surprising, he met with success. Yes, a man of forty-one, ugly and deformed, had the art to compel an accomplished young lady of twenty-one to discard a handsome young officer of her own age, who was her first, and, for three years past, had been her only lover!

Not many weeks passed away before she repented

of her sacrifices and suffered for her inexperience. A relative of hers, some years older, of an amiable and irreproachable character, and married to a nobleman of an eminent station in that country, often saw Talleyrand at her house, but always with an undisguised aversion. He, in revenge, resolved to conquer, humiliate and ruin this rebel female, who no sooner remarked his assiduities than she seemed to soften into submission. Her intent was, however, only to expose the infamy of the intriguer and to preserve her relative from his snares for the future. She assented, therefore, to a surrender, as soon as he could prove that he had no other mistress. To effect this purpose he began to quarrel with his *bonne amie* about her former lover, of whom, though now excluded from all *tête-à-têtes* in her boudoir, he pretended to be jealous. To remove this bone of contention, she obtained for the officer an order from his colonel to join his regiment immediately, at a distance of nearly 400 English miles; but an illness, the consequence of sincere, but disappointed love, did not permit him to obey. Talleyrand, in the meantime, procured several pressing invitations from the nobility and gentry in the neighbourhood, which gave him an opportunity to absent himself. He had already, before his departure, begun to act the moralist, and in reprobating

himself for what had passed, desired her to restore the father of her daughter his health with her affection. When at a distance, he repeated in letters what he had expressed in his conversation. Her answers evince a vigorous, but agitated mind, feeling the pangs of a slighted attachment, or suffering from injured pride and humbled vanity.[1]

"*At three o'clock in the afternoon.*

"I could not begin my letter this morning—I was in a situation which made it utterly impossible for me to write; besides, I had conceived a plan which I wanted previously to execute, and it is done.

"All my pleasing dreams of happiness are for ever fled! I dared still once more flatter myself with the idea that I could be happy! It was a folly! I ought to have known that happiness was

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1 In the publication called *Mon Sejour en Allemagne*, supposed to be written by Ch. Villars, now a member of the National Institute, most of the particulars of this infamous intrigue are found. These the author, in his travels through that part of Germany, has since heard confirmed by the female relation of the unfortunate victim of Talleyrand's art and perfidy. By that lady he was favoured with these original and last letters of her friend. They were written, with several others in his possession, to Talleyrand, some days previous to the fatal catastrophe, and cruelly given up by him in expectation of augmenting the enormity of his past guilt by another seduction and another adultery. The author obtained permission to publish them, with due discretion to the high relatives of the

not my lot in this world! I wished to enjoy the peace of content, and of those pure pleasures destined only to be the recompense of virtue. How extravagant was the idea! I am well punished for it—and by whom? By him who had created this too flattering hope—by him who inspired my soul with this expectation—by him whom I supposed able to restore me my long lost happiness; that internal calm; that esteem of myself; in fine, everything that my unfortunate destiny has caused me to lose.

"Oh! Charles! I utter no reproaches; I have none to utter. I am unhappy, more unhappy than I have ever been; but I reproach no one but myself for what has passed, which I am not able to undo! Nevertheless, it is true, if I merit my sufferings, I do not merit all that your letter contains; no! God is my witness, I did not merit it. To tell thee what this cruel letter has made me endure—alas! it is

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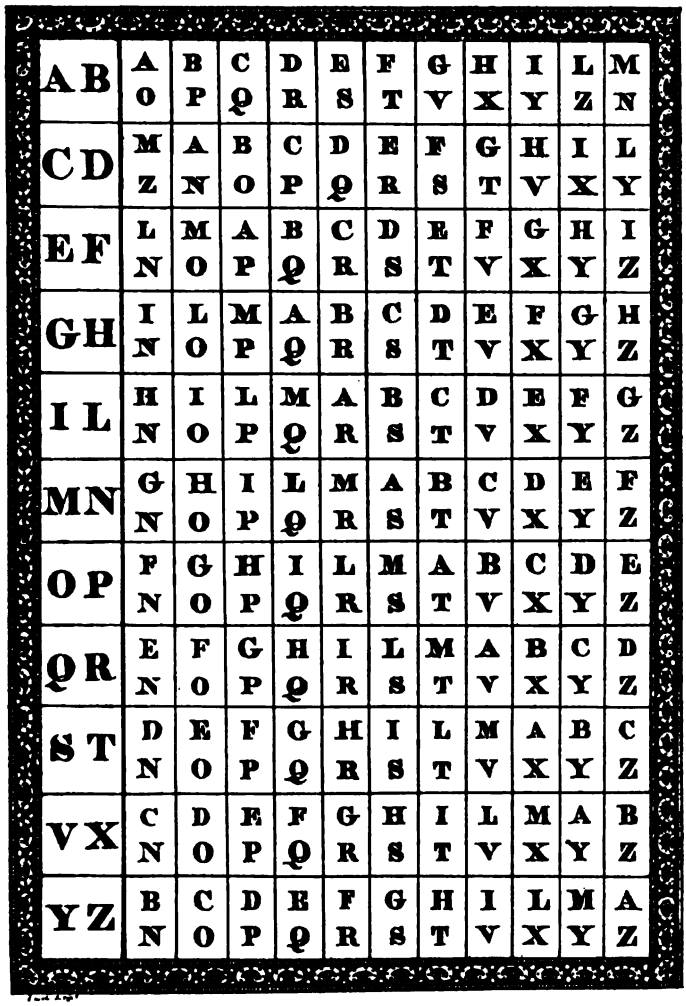
injured party, and he hopes that he has made a proper use of this condescension.

As these letters necessarily lose by a translation, copies of the originals in the French will be found in an appendix to this work, one of them in a fac-simile. When it is remembered that this was not her native tongue, her talents must be applauded, whilst her errors are lamented. The purity of language equals her elegance of expression, and her strength and fluency of thought. She wrote English, Italian and German with equal accuracy.

impossible. I was raised to the height of felicity by that I received from thee yesterday; to-day, I am in the depth of misery.

"From what has passed, I deserve to be judged in this manner—I deserve, from what has passed, this terrible punishment! but the great God, who reads my inmost mind, knows that love, at present, has purified my heart; that I have revived, more than ever, the ardent desire of being prudent and virtuous. Yes! God knows, that, by your assistance, by my true, tender love, by my excess of love for thee, I hoped again to become what—with a mind formed for virtue—by the most unforeseen fatality, I, unfortunately, had ceased to be. I fondly hoped to have found in my darling lover a tender and indulgent friend, who, for the future, would serve me as a guide, who would offer me an assisting hand, to lead me back to the paths of virtue; and this assisting hand, alas! is now about to plunge me into an abyss! To enter upon a reformation, it is necessary to regain some esteem of oneself; it is necessary, as you made me perceive, that, notwithstanding my past errors, I have within me a desire and capacity of doing good, which, thanks to *love* and *friendship*, can enable me to repair partly what has passed. And yet, in your last letter, you tell me



AB	A O	B P	C Q	D R	E S	F T	G V	H X	I Y	L Z	M N
CD	M Z	A N	B O	C P	D Q	E R	F S	G T	H V	I X	L Y
EF	L N	M O	A P	B Q	C R	D S	E T	F V	G X	H Y	I Z
GH	I N	L O	M P	A Q	B R	C S	D T	E V	F X	G Y	H Z
IL	H N	I O	L P	M Q	A R	B S	C T	D V	E X	F Y	G Z
MN	G N	H O	I P	L Q	M R	A S	B T	C V	D X	E Y	F Z
OP	F N	G O	H P	I Q	L R	M S	A T	B V	C X	D Y	E Z
QR	E N	F O	G P	H Q	I R	L S	M T	A V	B X	C Y	D Z
ST	D N	E O	F P	G Q	H R	I S	L T	M V	A X	B Y	C Z
VX	C N	D O	E P	F Q	G R	H S	I T	L V	M X	A Y	B Z
YZ	B N	C O	D P	E Q	F R	G S	H T	I V	L X	M Y	A Z

powerful than they, and everything which I have done is rather to be ascribed to an error of judgment than the dictates of my feelings. A great desire of pleasing is my principal fault. The real stumbling-block to me is vanity; but my true and tender love for thee had preserved me from it for the future.

"With regard to the young man, I had explained to you the origin and particulars of my connection with him with the most perfect sincerity, as you requested, and I proposed. * * * *

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In fine, to speak a sincere truth, instead of loving him more than you, I feel at this very moment that I love thee more than I ever loved any being upon earth; and that in renouncing thee I renounce my sole felicity; and, nevertheless—yes, nevertheless—oh! my God! I see that I must renounce thee—I see it with despair—my hand trembles while I tell it; my heart is near breaking, and my eyes are dim with tears—I must renounce even thee! But do not imagine that it is to connect myself with the young man. No! I renounce even him, and this is no no sacrifice for me; no, I can have no more to do with him. * * * * * *

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"I do not speak in this manner to regain thee—no, Charles! I am convinced that I give up my greatest happiness; but as you judge me, I can hereafter be only your *friend*. * * * *

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Notwithstanding what I have said, and what I might say, you would not believe that my intercourse with the young man has ceased—and these doubts—I cannot endure them; in fine, I must submit to my fate—the felicity of a true, pure, and tender love I cannot expect—fortunate, if one day, for all my present sufferings, you can regain a better opinion of me. This winter I am to pass far from you. Oh! my God! after such pleasing expectations, why am I condemned to such a misfortune?

"The only object of my present desires is, that you will consent to what I propose, which will make me less unhappy. Come here, but come *as a friend;* do not lose sight of me a single instant; constantly observe my conduct; observe all my actions, and during all the time you will find that I avoid him, and that I can even remain without appertaining to you, the object of all my tenderness; then, perhaps, you will finally avow that I am not the slave of my senses, and I may then hope to enjoy happiness

in future. But if you will not remain with me *as a friend*, then I do not know what to do, because I must not, I cannot, I will not be your mistress until the moment when, with the most perfect conviction, you can say, 'Cordelia, I was unjust towards thee—you are not the slave of your senses, you are again worthy of all my tenderness and confidence.' Without waiting for the departure of the mail, I have found an opportunity to forward this letter. For pity's sake answer me, and say whether you will accept my proposition, which is my only hope.

"I conjure you to answer me by the courier who brings you this letter. Can you read this letter? I was so distressed while I wrote it that it is hardly legible. Address your letter, by the bearer of this, *to my husband*, and *rest assured* that, notwithstanding the direction, nobody but myself will open it."

In this letter—an answer to Talleyrand's complaint of want of sincerity—this lady was induced to stoop to a falsehood, in hopes of preventing the inconstancy of her seducer. From the day she was connected with him, all intimacy ceased with her former lover. Of this he was well convinced, but, wishing to begin a new intrigue, he not only had cunning enough to make her believe that his desertion was her fault, but

that she deserved his reproaches, and was unworthy of his attachment. Either in denying or accusing herself of a double intrigue, he was sure of succeeding in his plot. In the former case, he would again declaim against her infidelity, and in the latter, torment her duplicity. Whatever, therefore, the final issue might be, he would enjoy the barbarous triumph of having degraded her in her own eyes, after having dishonoured her in the opinion of the public. Her agitated state every line of her correspondence evinces; but her next letter shows that her health had been impaired from her affliction, as much as her feelings had suffered from her sensibility:

"*Monday.*

"Yesterday I would not take the drugs which the physician had prescribed. 'Alas!' said I to myself, 'of what use are all those remedies? the source of my malady is in my heart.' My husband, however, compelled me by his reiterated instances. I do not know whether it be the effect of the prescriptions, or if nature, exhausted, has overpowered my grief, but last night I got some hours' rest, and I rose this morning at my regular time, instead of being under the necessity, as I was yesterday, of remaining the whole day in bed. When I awoke this morning, I was at first quite confused; I had not a single distinct

sentiment of what, for some days past, has made me so miserable; but my sad ideas, my cruel remembrances returned but too soon. Oh! Charles! how could you, in exchange for my tenderness, further condemn me to wretchedness? Why do you debar yourself from a happiness so easily obtained? Alas! cannot the sentence you have pronounced be recalled? No, it cannot! because—I repeat it again—it requires a heavenly power to enable you to read my heart, to enlighten you, that you may distinguish truth from falsehood; you alone cannot do it—I see it too well—you cannot believe the unfortunate Cordelia was sincere. Perhaps you conclude her artifice truth, and her truth falsehood. What did I in writing those fatal letters? Oh! Charles! why, at ——, where I was so sincere, did you refuse to believe me? Why then those cruel doubts, so afflicting to me? Your doubts —your suspicions frequently troubled me, even in the midst of happiness: in the moments when I felt myself most happy you threw out hints and made use of expressions that wounded my soul most cruelly. At ——, oh! God! where I enjoyed so great felicity, you were the cause of many and bitter tears. Do you remember it, dear and cruel friend? I said to myself that we should never be perfectly happy if I did not succeed to inspire in

you a confidence equally necessary in love as well as in friendship. I would purchase this confidence at any rate. It was this desire that gave me the fortunate idea of accusing myself. 'He will not believe me,' said I to myself, 'before I acknowledge myself culpable. My seeming sincerity will finally procure me his confidence, which is to me an absolute want.' Nevertheless, I could not persuade myself to let you suppose that I divided my favours. This was the cause of my demanding your advice when I had no need of it. I should have said, afterwards, that I had followed it, and I hoped that, having finally removed your suspicions by my confessions, you would for the future think me sincere. I was far from expecting that you would advise me to renounce yourself. Having received that fatal letter which showed how wrong my calculations were; having, by a falsehood, destroyed all my happiness, I was reduced to despair, not knowing what to say or to do. Should I tell you the truth?—that I had related a falsehood in these imaginary avowals? I dared not: you would take it for a new artifice. To avoid this appearance, I imagined it would be best to inform you of my conversation with the young man—a conversation that took place long ago. Now, though too late, I return to truth, but I am per-

suaded it is in vain; you will never more believe me. In writing to you the second of these two letters, my heart was so oppressed—as if I had a presentiment of their consequences, although I persisted in these as the only means to appear sincere with you. It is thus I have caused my own wretchedness; but I am not the sole cause of it. Oh! Charles! your suspicions, your unfortunately cruel mistrusts have had the greatest share! I should be less miserable were I alone the only sufferer; but oh! you!—oh! you! my well-beloved, for whom no sacrifice would be too great for me, whose content I exclusively meditated. Oh! Charles! you partake the horror of my destiny; and we could both be so happy! Everything else was in our favour; but with all that I dare not hope any more. What will your letter of Thursday contain?

"Charles, I am possessed of more *sang-froid* to-day than yesterday. I am always melancholy, miserable beyond expression; but what I say is dictated by reflection, and *I persist to tell you:* if you do not assent to the last favour I have to ask of you—if you intend to leave me without seeing me, then, forgetting every tie that should restrain me, I will set out—I will follow you everywhere. I can forsake my child, my husband—I can forego everything for thee; but to

remain without having seen you—to remain a victim to my horrid despair, it is beyond all human power to support. God knows I cannot endure the very thought.

"Charles! Charles! have pity on me; do not sacrifice me to misery, despair and remorse. Oh! Charles! a woman who loves you with the sincerest affection—a woman who has nothing to reproach herself with towards you, but with having once used an artifice with an intention that was not criminal, does she merit to be condemned to eternal wretchedness? If such is your determination, and if it is irrevocable, then pray to God that he may soon finish the deplorable existence of the unfortunate Cordelia!"

The husband of the lady whose seduction Talleyrand now laboured to effect, being neither a convert to the precepts of German philosophy nor an admirer of the tenets of French morality, was affectionate in his family, strict in his religious and regular in his social duties; he injured no man, and would, therefore, probably not patiently endure unprovoked offence from others. Occupying besides an eminent situation in his own country, his resentment for any outrage offered to his bed could not fail to be certain as well as severe. To give so much the greater *éclat* to his gallantry, or rather to prevent vengeance and

justice from overtaking him, Talleyrand, who now had obtained permission to return to France, told his new mistress that he proposed to carry her to that land of infamy and licentiousness, though, in fact, he only intended to carry her away from her home, expose her, ruin her, and then, perhaps, leave her on the frontiers of her country a prey to dishonour and want. This is the journey mentioned and dreaded by poor Cordelia in the foregoing and following letters, because she supposed it to have no other object than what he had written to her, that "he was going to travel to try to forget his love for her"—a sentiment of which she had made herself unworthy, but from which he, nevertheless, was the greater sufferer. The idea of having, by her imprudence, both lost a lover to whom she was still strongly attached, and made him unhappy by his attachment to her which he could not remove, increased her own torments and hastened to close the scene of his villainy.

"*Sunday.*

"The day of your departure from —— is, then, fixed; you are going to remove far away from me, and that without having seen me. Having received this news, it is time for me to write to you for the *last time*, on a subject of such importance to

our happiness. It will cost me great efforts to write to you as calmly as is necessary. In spite of all my endeavours to govern myself, my hand trembles and my ideas are confused. Charles! I repeat it—it is *for the last time* I shall attempt to address myself to your heart; if it is in vain, I condemn myself to silence; I submit to *my destiny—decided by you.* I beg you to read what I am going to tell you *with attention—read it often*, and do not pronounce your sentence hastily.

"Yet I hope nothing from this letter—no! no! I have nothing to hope; your resolution is, no doubt, not to be shaken. Yes, I perceive, more than ever, that you are resolved to break those affectionate ties which united us, which made us so happy. I shall endeavour to examine with *sang-froid* the reasons which have induced you to take that fatal determination. Were not the happiness and honour of Cordelia your first and principal motives? Yes, these were the tender, the honourable and the pure motives that induced you to make a sacrifice, to which you will perceive that I also shall submit. I respect your intentions—but take care, Charles! that you have not made a wrong calculation; take care, in wishing my felicity, that you do not bring about my destruction; take care, in spite of your

praiseworthy intentions, that one day you may not have the most cruel reflections preying on your mind; take care, when you might have made me both happy and respectable, that you *alone* are not the author of my misery, and, in desiring to restore me to the path of virtue, that you do not irremediably force me into the road of perdition; take care that you do not hurry me into a most awful futurity! Your advice is excellent, your moral lessons are pure—but, alas! it is too late for me to follow them. Charles! Charles! a violent and invincible passion consumes me! You tell me that I am to search for happiness by fulfilling the duties imposed on me as a wife, as a mistress, and as a mother! The last title I acknowledge, and shall try to observe its commands; but for those of a wife and a mistress, I acknowledge them no longer. I protest that it is totally impossible that I should ever have anything more to do with the young man. In a connection between us I see no advantages either for him or for me; and did they even exist, my heart revolts against them. Besides, I do not see that any duty urges me to keep up our acquaintance. Is it on his account? our characters are too opposite to assimilate and to agree. He will suffer for a moment in resigning me for ever, but he will retrieve his

happiness. As to Julia! my child has no interest that can oblige me to assent to a continuance of our connection. God forbid that she should ever know him to be the author of her existence. With regard to myself, if all these reasons did not exist to dissuade me, I should never more have any connection with him. I cannot, therefore, as you conclude, find any comfort or consolation in a union founded upon duty, because I know no such union.

"I must, then, remain afflicted and isolated, devoured by an incurable passion. Reproaching myself that I might have been happy; tormented by unavailing regrets and desires—my youth, my health, my life will fade away. But this is not the greatest evil to which you expose me. If, in order to extricate myself from an insupportable situation; if, to drive away consuming thoughts; if my soul, having lost that serenity it enjoyed in a prosperous state; if, in fine, I run the risk of becoming one day more despicable than ever—Charles! it will be entirely owing to you. But if, on the contrary, I could have lived with you, oh! I should have become so prudent, that you might, nothwithstanding my past errors, have judged me worthy of you. Then—then first should I discharge the duty of a wife and a mistress with rapture, and to its full extent, because love

would then have made the exercise of virtue easy. Oh! my God! Charles! will you not pity me? You fancy that what you are doing is for my welfare; but you deceive yourself, and I am the victim of this cruel mistake. But, perhaps, it is on your own account that you wish to see an end of our connection. Do you think me unworthy of you?—or do you suspect that I partake of happiness with anybody else? Oh! Charles! if I have been unworthy of thee, I will devote my whole life to repair my faults. Pardon me, generous man, tender and sensible friend! Forgive what has passed, and put me into a situation to efface it by a contrary conduct in future. Convince yourself, by never leaving me, that you have no partners in my favours. I promise you always to remain under your eyes whilst you are with me, and, for any short journeys, I could undertake them with you. Pray do not refuse to convince yourself of everything! Oh! make me not miserable!

"Pray listen to me! If it is in vain to ask you to pass the winter with me—if you have absolutely condemned me to that sacrifice—then do not complete the measure of my sufferings, but remain in some place in the neighbourhood not too distant from this. I solemnly swear that, without your permission, I will not visit you. At least, in the first outset, do not

remove too far; try to gain time to reflect on everything more calmly. No! it is impossible that your mind can possess sufficient tranquillity to estimate exactly our mutual situation. If you act rashly—and when my happiness was in your power, if my ruin were the inevitable consequence of your resolve—could you ever forgive yourself?

"Only for this winter—and afterwards you can carry me away with you far from hence. Then I know nothing that can prevent me. Only for this winter—and you may observe everything yourself; or can you for your satisfaction invent any expedient to send the young man entirely away, when he is a little recovered? Find out that expedient to restore me, Charles—to restore me felicity. No! I cannot *live* without you. In vain have I made every possible effort with myself. Take care—I repeat it—not to prepare for thyself *eternal* repentance.

"At least, as a last favour, do not travel too far from hence—I could never support it.

"You can hardly read this letter; but it informs you, better than any description of mine, how my health is. I can hardly hold the pen in my hand. You will, perhaps, even accuse me of being the cause of my own illness; you will tell me it is my duty to take care of myself. Alas! I wish nothing

better, but God knows that I have done everything that could be done; but, in spite of myself, I am in a most shocking state, from which you alone can relieve me.

"Adieu! Charles! I shall not afflict you any more. I have *for ever* done speaking to you of my dreadful sufferings. Vain words will no longer inform you of them; but one day you will be acquainted with them, in consequence of the terrible effects they have produced with regard to me; but I promise you solemnly never to mention them more.

"Adieu! Charles! adieu! you are then going to leave me! Be happy! Cordelia will do everything in the world not to interrupt your happiness. You shall hear no more of her sad sorrows! Adieu! my dear!—my best beloved!—my all! adieu! adieu!"

END OF VOL. I

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